1:Sanders Z-5/4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

823 361 Despite many difficulties, the rural Greeks continue to like the summits about them, and they settle down in bleak and stony areas with a contentment hard for the outsider to understand. At a point between Lamia and Karpenesi near Tymphrestos Mountain, we passed a peasant woman who was driving a donkey loaded with alfalfa to her village.

"This is a nice place here, isn't it?" we said, to get a conversation started.

"Yes, it's nicely situated."

"Have you got water?"

[312] "Yes, we brought it from afar [made an installation] and now we are all right. The winter is hard but we are prepared to face it. We gather our wood in advance and we sit around our fireplaces, spin, weave, eat chestnuts, while our animals are down below eating their fodder."

A few miles farther on we talked to another woman walking along the road. She remarked in the course of the conversation: "My son wanted to go to America. He went. Now, he's longing for his mountains."

To understand Greece, therefore, one must know not only the geography of her mountains, but the meaning of these mountains to the people who make them their home. The economic struggle in these highland villages 241 is told by Papaspyropoulos in his account of Kleitoria, in the Peloponnesos. 433 Notice his comparison with the lowland villages.

The villagers of my village, like all the others of that area, are farmers. Even the priest is an agriculturist, as well as the teacher, the doctor, and those who own the shops. The shepherds also are farmers; one day they go with [233] their sheep, and the next day they go to their fields. Farming is the basis; livestock and other occupations are secondary. Systematic livestock production is only done by the shepherds of Mount Chelmos. The agricultural life in our [312] village is very hard because the fields are few and divided into strips and the water is scarce. Each owner does not have his fields in one spot; he has one [423] stremma [one-fourth acre] here and another further down; the one on the heights and the other in the plains, the one to the right, the other to the left. Thus in walking "they melt [wear out] their shoes." The same and even worse takes place when it is time for watering. No roads! They walk on stones here and there in the ravines, and to go back to their village after their work, tired [487] as they are, they have to walk for an hour or more. And what sort of road! Abrupt paths and steep climbs. Neither shoes nor clothes can remain undamaged. They roam around in rags. Only on Sundays and on larger holidays can one see them in some way neatly dressed. A hard life without improvement, for the fields are few and not productive. A soft and restful life is led by the [312] lowlanders. They have a good plain, straight road and lots of water, which is supplied by the river there. For this reason they have all kinds of fruit orchards, vegetable gardens, and other kinds of trees.

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

or too little water; never is it "just right." If there is too much, a drainage project must be undertaken to make much-needed land available for cultivation.

The most noteworthy reclamation project before the turn of this century was the draining of Lake Kopais, just north of Thebes in Central Greece.[18] The work was undertaken by a French company in 1886 and completed by an English company in 1887, which continued to operate the agricultural estate of sixty thousand acres down to its purchase by the Greek government prior to the November elections of 1952. At that time, this large holding, along with its complicated drainage system, was turned over to the former tenants, who had worked for the foreign company. Now as owners, or as members of a cooperative, they face the necessity of making their contribution to the over-all maintenance of the drainage channels so that the water may run off adequately and prevent the land from reverting to its once-marshy condition. According to some foreign technicians, the Greeks are doing a good job of managing this operation.

Much of the time, however, there is too little water through the growing season. One answer to this scarcity has been the recent drilling of hundreds of wells, from which water is pumped to the thirsty fields through irrigation ditches. In addition, a number of ambitious water-control projects have led to considerable storage of water and the spread of irrigation.

In villages, usually on the edges of plains watered by streams flowing from a mountain source, the water crier is a unique institution. This individual is encountered, for instance, in the Peloponnesos, where he strides through the streets of the village calling out the name of the person whose patches of land are next in line to receive the flow of water. One of these criers had a voice so powerful that, while standing on the small plain below, he could notify people in the village on the mountainside hundreds of yards away.

A Greek villager, like the Arab, will make much over the merits of the water of his homeplace. To praise the water he will speak of it as *chonephtiko nero*, or "digestive water." He will even fight over it, as the following news item shows.

> Athens. The Kentucky mountaineers' storied concept of feudin' justice reached here recently and two girls were killed and four men were critically injured.
>
> Two Greek villages — Kerasovo and Papadates — went to war a few days ago to settle a dispute over water rights, and 400 men, women, and children battled for hours with clubs, hoes, knives and hand grenades.
>
> Two army companies were sent to restore order.
>
> The cause of the trouble was water. Sovereignty over Cold Fountain, a spring irrigating the wheat-fields of Kerasovo, was contested by the farmers of neighboring Papadates.

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One night "unknown persons" changed the course of the spring and the water was diverted toward Papadates.

As Kerasovo villagers conferred in the village square, forty villagers from Papadates, armed with stones, assaulted the fringes of Kerasovo.

A general alert was sounded. Hoes were taken from the barns of Kerasovo, knives from the kitchens and hand grenades — relics of the Greek civil war — from various hiding places.

Meanwhile, armed reinforcements arrived from Papadates. Policemen fired into the air to intimidate the enraged villagers, but no one paid any attention.

A few hours later two infantry companies arrived from the nearest town and imposed martial law. Two teen-age girls died from injuries received during the battle. (*New York Times*, September 9, 1954)

The storks like to nest in a village around which there are watered meadows or even marshes. In the village of Almyros, between Lamia and Volos (in Thessaly), a family of storks had built a huge nest of mud and twigs around the cross on the top of the church. "You see," the peasants of Almyros say, "his nest on that spot shows that the stork is a blessed bird." Pharsala, on the main route between Athens and Thessalonike, stands out as a town especially favored by the storks whose coming is considered a good omen. In Epirus and Macedonia and Thrace the evening silence is often broken by the rattlelike noise which this bird makes with his red beak — his white plumage gleaming in the waning sunlight and his long legs silhouetted against the sky. The storks are to the plains what the eagle is to the mountain, one a bird of the lowlands which builds his nests in the chimneys of village homes with people all around, and the other a bird of the heights preferring solitude and willing to pit himself against nature's angriest moods.

Mountains versus Plains

Mountains and plains take on social meaning as people try to gain a living from them. In Greece people frequently speak of "mountain villages" and "plains villages" as though their residents differed from each other. As a matter of fact, both in physical appearance (location, house types, and land use) and in accessibility, the plains and mountain villages are distinct and will be described more fully in a later chapter.

K. D. Karavidas, of the Agricultural Bank of Greece, has for a long time been interested in this problem and points it up by telling an anecdote:

This happened in a mountain village in Central Greece near the Gulf of Corinth. Every year these people would come down to the plains, work fifteen days, and get beans and wheat to carry them through the year. During the German occupation, however, the prices of food went so high that the plains peasants decided to do their own harvesting. They took the produce, which

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

is going on in the world." "A few of us get small cooking stoves and others electric irons." Some also add, with a twinkle in their eyes, that since they can see after dark they do not have to go to bed so early and that the birth rate will probably drop.

Where there is no electricity there may be radio sets run by batteries. In one mountain village we found that five of the eight coffeehouses had battery receiving sets which they always turned on to the newscasts. "Why," we wanted to know, "are you villagers so interested in newscasts?" "Oh, we like to hear farm prices over the radio, but most of all we like news about what is going on in foreign countries because that is what enlightens us." In some of the most out-of-the-way villages we found receiving sets run by gas motors supplied by the United States Mission. Thus the air waves are reaching the village plateia and the villagers' sense of isolation gives way to a growing demand for more of the benefits enjoyed outside the village.

The water supply in the village is quickly identified by the procession of people to and from the springs, artesian well, or street faucets. A local gendarme in his trim gray uniform, who joins our group, and a field guard on his way to leave the rifle slung over his shoulder at the community-council office are expressions of services from the national or local government, as is the mailman who comes from the next largest center once a day, or perhaps three times a week.

Our observations of the people, public buildings, and available utilities are constantly interrupted by the liveliness of the eager conversation around the café table. Although the American visitor is not directly engaged, the topics sound so interesting and so close to the facts he is trying to collect that he cannot remain entirely aloof. For instance, the young officer in charge of some people recently resettled in the Greek-Albanian border area under his control says that the peasants are complaining because their land allotment is too small and the soil too sandy, so they go into the forbidden no-man's-land to cultivate even if they do place their lives in jeopardy; a man who prides himself on knowing local history affects a learned air when he tells the history of the local church, built on the site of an ancient pagan shrine; a child, bolder than the rest, comes up to ask the woman interpreter, who is wearing slacks, whether she is a man or a woman.

Again, in a low voice, a local official inquires politely: "Who is this American professor? What is he doing in our village?" When he is told that the professor is interested in understanding the Greek people, and in telling Americans about them, he finds it hard to believe. "You mean," someone asks, "that he has come all the way from America to visit our village? Please tell the professor that we are greatly honored." One man adds, "I've lived here sixty-seven years and during none of that time has a Greek professor ever come to visit us." A woman related to the coffee-

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[IV]

Land as a Birthright

Grandfather slipped his hand underneath and drew out a little bundle which had lain over his heart. 423

"It is nothing. . . . A handful of earth. . . ."

"A handful of earth! . . ."

"Yes, a handful of earth from our fields so we can plant a root of basil in our land of exile, to remind us. . . ."

Elias Venezis, *Aeolia*, p. 259

A Handful of Earth

To some readers, this passage will reveal a poetic insight into the mystic attachment which not only the refugees portrayed but people in many parts of the world have for the land which is theirs, which they revere, and for which they will endure bloody encounters. To other readers, this will seem an overromanticized stereotyping of the peasant. Which reaction is more justifiable in considering the Greek villages today?

Seeking an answer to this question brought me face to face with the dramatic social changes which have been occurring in Greece, with all their marked regional differences. Facts and figures are a good starting point for trying to resolve a debated question. Certainly, in Greece today, with the population increase, good land is at a very high premium. The "handful of 423 178 241

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earth" is a term really descriptive of the average peasant holding of less than 10 acres, too small an area to support the average family of 5 people who try to live from its products. Put another way, 37 percent of the farms have an area of less than 2.5 acres, and 51 percent comprise from 2.5 to 12.5 acres.[1]

As peasants come more and more into the orbit of the city, as they substitute commercial values for their traditional agrarian values, the bond with the land loosens and their attitude toward the land undergoes a change.[2] Where it once was a sacred heritage to be preserved and passed on intact to posterity, the land tends to become a commodity to be bought and sold; and the peasant becomes a farmer, whom one approaches differently from a peasant, for his attitudes and values are different. Such differences are described more fully later as part of the summing up of social changes noted in Greece.

There was no way of finding out what changes were occurring among the villagers in the various regions of Greece except to talk with them and with those who work with them. Few studies had been made. People in Athens, both Greek and American, guessed and speculated, sometimes shrewdly, but no one could do more than point out that change was occurring. So I had to go into the provinces and see for myself, being careful to visit areas which Greeks generally agreed differed markedly from each other. Some areas have become much more like the city than other areas, more farmer than peasant. Others are much more in the classic peasant mold of Hesiod's day.[3]

Far in the northwest corner of Greece, in Epirus, the director of agriculture said:

> The rural people here do not part willingly with their land. On the contrary, because the plots are small, they are always trying to increase the size of their holdings. At the same time, the people here have a strong trait of localism. They may be offered a larger tract in another part of Greece in keeping with some of our current resettlement programs, but the Epirote is reluctant to leave. He prefers to live on a poverty margin in the area that he knows and loves rather than to follow the promise of a better existence elsewhere.
>
> One clue to the importance of land to the Epirote is the quarrels that families and even villages have about it. Within one hour of Ioannina there are three villages which have been arguing over a tiny bit of land for three months. Although the land is so rocky that it is useful only for pasture, a representative had to be sent to Constantinople to search the old records to see to whom the land really belonged.
>
> It also happens quite frequently that Epirotes who move to Athens, and even settle there permanently, becoming quite prosperous, won't relinquish the fields that they own back here. They, too, still sense a certain security in the possession of land.

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

Moving eastward across Northern Greece, I learned from the agricultural officials of Serrai (in Macedonia) that more and more unwilling people there were being forced to get rid of their farms and go down to the cities. This is not because of any lack of love for the soil but because the yields in the mountainous areas make it impossible to earn a living. Economic necessity has forced a change of location, but not yet a change in attitude. One official compared Macedonia and Thessaly, with respect to attachment for the land: "I would say that there has been much greater security through the years in Thessaly, which has led to more fondness for their fields; here in Northern Greece the constant uprooting of families has created an uneasiness and therefore a tendency for people to part with their land."

In Thrace, farther eastward, the peasant is still attached to the soil but "he is not stuck to it absolutely body and soul," as one peasant expressed it. These areas of Macedonia and parts of Thrace depend largely on growing Oriental tobacco, a commodity sometimes moving slowly on world markets, with agricultural depression a serious consequence. Here the man-land bond is loosening.

The peasants living at the head of the Chalkidike peninsula (central Macedonia) around Polygyros, the capital of the prefecture, enjoy relative prosperity and are not willing to leave their land. Nor is there any desire to emigrate, although five or six families have sent sons to Italy to study agriculture and veterinary science in the expectation that they would return better prepared to improve agriculture and kindred pursuits.

In the rich plains of Thessaly, south from Macedonia, the mechanization of agriculture is apparent everywhere. When harvests are good, people are optimistic about the future, secure about their food supply. Peasants there have invested heavily in tractors, which have had an interesting effect on attitudes toward the land. In this area of good soil, where scientific farming is increasingly practiced, the basis of the attachment is changing from the traditional idea of land ownership as a sacred trust closely bound in with the fortune of one's immediate family to a view of land as a source of financial gain. Here in Thessaly the rural man is changing from peasant to farmer, in contrast to the hard-pressed people in the northern mountains who are forced to move to cities for bread and, far away from their land, still cling to peasant values.

When a peasant in Central Greece was asked what a family from his village would do if it received $500 from America, he said: "A man would be more apt to buy fields rather than improve his home; of course, if his house leaks and he has enough land, he would start with the house but, generally speaking, a peasant from my village thinks it more important to own more land than to build a big house. Of course, we do have another

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

type among us — the 'chewer' who would squander the $500 right and left in the hope that the next year the cousin in the United States would send some more money in answer to a plea of distress!"

Here, then, is what one might call an illustration of a normal process of change in attitude, the peasant becoming the farmer. When the house rather than the accumulation of more land begins to be stressed, the farmer is moving to "city ways." Throughout the south, in the Peloponnesos, the younger people seem more ready to move cityward than do their elders, who still insist that one should hold onto the land.

In Northern Greece when there is a shift from the land the whole family, young and old, moves together, whereas in the Peloponnesos the young people make the move on their own. This seems to indicate that when the traditional attitude toward land changes, another basic change in peasant life is occurring — in family relationships.[4] However, everywhere in the southern villages, as elsewhere in the country, the village shopkeeper, barber, shoemaker, and other artisans, as well as the priest, all own land which they farm if they can find the time; if not, some member of their family works it instead.

On the basis, then, of dozens of interviews — only a small sampling has been quoted — carried out in thirteen thousand miles of travel in the provinces, some generalizations may be attempted. Wide regional variations are apparent. One may generalize, though conscious of many exceptions, that peasants on fairly good soil which they work with their time-honored methods by hand and not by machines hold strongly to the belief that the earth and the earth alone is their treasure and their great security. On the other hand, where peasants in Northern Greece and elsewhere live in areas frequently troubled by war, or on marginal land, they will reluctantly accept a chance to move away from their family fields — even to the cities. But those who sold their land before the war and lost all of their money because of devaluation now appreciate the worth of land even more. In the fertile plains where mechanization has come, the attitude toward land corresponds more to that in Western Europe and the United States: it becomes a commodity rather than a part of the family heritage. In areas of high education and of long-time contact with the city, such as in much of the Peloponnesos or in Attica, the urban values and attitudes as to land and family have so permeated the thinking of the young that they prefer nonfarm work when this can be found, abandoning the emphasis their elders still place upon "the good earth" as treasure, security, and heritage.[5]

The Cycle of Land Ownership (Attica)

Whatever the quality of the villager's attachment to his fields is now, he always has had, and still has, an intimacy with his fields that the city

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Attica

dweller can seldom appreciate. Many a villager may curse the land or bless it, as the seafarer does the sea, but he does it as though he were speaking of a part of his own body. In this he resembles his forebears of three thousand years ago. Legally, however, land ownership in Greece has gone a full cycle in the past three millenniums.[4]

A good vantage point from which to view this cycle of land ownership is Attica, the area around Athens. The average tourist to Greece speeds down the road from Athens on his way through the Attic countryside to Sounion, where Poseidon's temple overlooks the sea; or he drives a few miles north to Marathon to climb the memorial mound; he moves through Attica for forty or fifty miles on his way to Megara and Corinth, ancient places to be seen and photographed. On all of these trips he will see peasants everywhere. In the spring and summer they are bringing loads of vegetables — carrots, tomatoes, squash — into the city; in the fall they are taking grapes from the vineyards to be pressed by foot in the large wooden vats or, as winter comes, carrying the dead branches of the vines home to burn in their small, cold houses. Their slow-moving animals delay the tourist bus, their sheep respond erratically to the auto horn, but the peasants themselves seem unconcerned about the traffic. And the land, the dusty countryside, dotted with the gray-green olive groves, and the dark points of the cypress, surrounded by heights incredibly changing from silver to rose to violet and purple in the dusk, must look very much the same as it did when travelers or Athenians described it long ago.

In the sixth century B.C. most of the soil of Attica was in the hands of individual proprietors. It was "cultivated, as far as it was cultivable at all, by peasant proprietors, who appear to have been, if not prosperous, at least independent and contented until the devastation of Attica in the Peloponnesian War brought with it widespread unsettlement and ruin and inaugurated a period of hardship and struggle for the rural population."[5] Today peasant proprietors again work their own land, independent and moderately content, on the Attic plain and up the rocky slopes where crops, vineyards or olive trees can be made to grow.

The story of what happened between the Golden Age's peasant proprietors and the return of the land to peasant owners in the Atomic Age not only reveals much about the past of Greece but helps explain the contemporary peasant's concern for land.[6] The individual property holder, sometimes medium and sometimes small, persisted, although with difficulty, from classic times down to the Byzantine period. Then some villages, called *kephalochoria,* did manage even under Byzantium to preserve the private peasant holdings, and many more settlements possessed communal property to serve the needs of the commune. But most of the individual holdings yielded to the large estate which belonged to the crown, the nobles, or the clergy.[7] After the end of Byzantium in 1453, the Turkish

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Attica

175 authorities continued the existing forms of land ownership as long as they controlled Attica and the rest of Greece.

●423 There were, for four centuries, four ways in which agricultural and forest land was held during the Turkish occupation. First of all, much land (the old Byzantine estates) belonged to the Turkish state; that is, it was the property of the Sultan who owned it by right of sovereignty. He could not give it away irrevocably, but he could award it as grants to Turks or to Christians adopting Islam. Such grants included the fiefs (or estates called *tsiflikia* in Turkish) over which the new owners had all property rights. These holdings were found chiefly in the richest parts of Attica.[10]

A second form of property in land was that owned by the communes, which had full property rights. The Turkish occupation, for reasons of general policy, preserved the communes existing prior to the occupation together with their administrative institutions. Also, every city, town, and village preserved its magistrates who, elected for the most part by the Christians, were called *demogerontes* (village elders). The occupying Turks also respected the communal property reserved for the needs of the commune (pastures, woodlots), which was administered by the demogerontes. As the later description of local government will show, these elders, in addition, had the right to impose taxes, enforce civil law, exercise police and other powers, with the result that they became the natural protectors and councilors of every inhabitant in the commune. This institution of demogerontes was the incentive which maintained and helped develop national sentiment during the years of occupation, and it was found in those communes which had been *kephalochoria* (head or independent villages) in the Byzantine period.

A third form of landed property was that owned individually by the inhabitants of these kephalochoria, the villages which had the communal land mentioned above. These were settlements usually in the mountain or hill regions. Because their poor or mediocre soil was of little economic interest to the Turks, and because of their inaccessible location, they were not completely subjected economically. They preserved the regime of small holdings: either small holdings already existing in Byzantine times or those which their inhabitants had begun to acquire around the places where they lived, some by purchase of the right of limited tenure, some by grant on the part of landlords. These small holdings frequently were planted with olive trees, vineyards, and fruit trees, as they had been for generations.

The fourth form of property was that which belonged to monasteries and to religious foundations. The Turks, under the system of the Waqf, deeded land to mosques or hospitals in keeping with Koranic law in much the same way as Christians had given land to monasteries in the Byzantine era. In this way, large estates came into being under the control of these

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religious and philanthropic foundations, reinforcing the system of large rural estates in private hands. The convents of Pentele and Petraki in Attica became very rich as the result of gifts and bequests from Christians who did not want their land to pass into the hands of the Turks.

These four forms of land ownership began to change in the nineteenth century with the coming of Greek independence and the Treaty of Constantinople in 1832, setting the boundaries between Greece and Turkey. While the communal land and the peasant holdings of the kephalochoria remained much as before, as did the monastery properties, the great estates of the beys changed hands, going to Greeks with the departure of their Turkish owners from Greece. They remained intact, worked by tenants under Greek landlords for another century — the peasants were legally landless. The land reform legislation of 1917 changed the last two forms by expropriating large estates and turning back the land once again to private cultivators. The cycle of land ownership in Attica was complete. As P. J. Iliopoulos has put it in his excellent study of Attica:

> This audacious agrarian policy of expropriation, which allowed in general each proprietor to keep only 30 hectares of cultivable land, has permitted landless inhabitants of Attica to become owners. This right was acquired on condition of complete payment of the value of the plots acquired and with the obligation of cultivation under penalty of forfeiture. The total amount of land alienated amounted to about 17,000 hectares.[11]

When one realizes that the total cropland of Attica was 33,000 hectares, this 17,000 hectares becomes a very significant figure. By 1948 the croplands of Attica totaled 63,640 hectares, with 36,249 hectares in cereals and the rest in other crops.

The fact that the peasant in Attica now owns his land has much to do with the increased interest which he takes in its improvement. As one would expect, working the land around Athens, though still performed in part according to ancient methods, is moving more and more into the commercialized sphere. There are now, for instance, modern poultry houses with large flocks which are the pride of the men, who formerly would not do the "woman's work" with chickens; truck farming is increasing, greatly dependent upon water now available for irrigation. There is a definite shift from olives to vineyards, since a vine matures in three to five years, whereas an olive tree will not bear for twelve years and does not reach full maturity until twenty years.

On the farm, which is now his own, the peasant is also adding to his plantation of fruit trees and vines, for the strong insolation and clear sky of Attica make them produce well. His venturing into dairying, dependent upon forage crops and vegetables, will be limited to the irrigation he can manage. The chances are, however, that cereals will continue to be the

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178 main crop because the peasant can harvest them before the great heat of
241 summer descends and the countryside lies parched and torpid under the blazing sun.

Land Reform (Thessaly)

● 423 Attica was selected as the best illustration of land ownership in Greece, but Thessaly, with the richest land in Greece, almost selects itself to illustrate modern Greek land reform.[13] The size of the farm holding in Thessaly averages just over eleven acres, which is the highest of any province: the figure is less than ten acres in Macedonia, Thrace, and Central Greece; just over five acres in Epirus and the Peloponnesos; and less than five acres on the islands. No wonder that now and then I encountered what can best be termed "land-hungry peasants," particularly where they thought that the government, through its program of land redistribution, was in a position to turn over to them at a reasonable figure the fields of some estate not yet fully reduced to the proper size set by the land-reform law.

[241]

This was the case in 1953 in Thomai, a village not far from Larissa, the capital city of Thessaly. I was driving the director of agriculture in Larissa out on his inspection trip through the neighboring area where a severe rainstorm had damaged the nearly ripe wheat. The road, stretching for miles between grain fields, was headed in the direction of Trikkala and passed the Larissa Forest Nursery, whose sign linked it with the Marshall Plan. Farther on, in recently harvested grain fields, a few gleaners were bending over the golden stubble in the hot sun, gathering their winter's bread supply like Ruth who gleaned in the fields of Boaz. In rich Thessaly, there are few gleaners now, but the unwritten law permitting gleaning still exists for those poor villagers who need it.

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During the drive the discussion centered about the problem of land reform. The director was reluctant to visit Thomai because he had not yet received any final instructions from Athens to help him answer the questions he knew the villagers would ask about some promised increase in their land. The Land Reform Law of 1917 had boldly attacked the problem of the big estates, and its gradual application had eliminated tenancy throughout most of Greece by 1930. Around 1922 the influx of refugees, with their desperate need for land, speeded up the redistribution. This law still permitted certain classes of landlords to hold up to 500 acres although requiring them to dispose of acreages above that amount. As the result of further government action in 1952, the archbishop of the national church had agreed to the sale of the monastery estates, which accounted for a little more than one fourth of the 1.5 million acres to be turned over to private proprietors in this new redistribution program. Another type of landlord living in Larissa had formerly owned about half of the rich Thessaly plain; he had given up most of the land, keeping the 500-acre maximum holding.

423 427 [671] [792]

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Thessaly

423 [427]

But he was being forced to surrender even this by the provisions of the 1952 constitution which sought to put in the hands of all the remaining peasant tenants the land which they tilled.

[167]

It was some of this land the Thomai peasants were waiting for. Thomai was a village of refugees from near Konya, Turkey, who had settled there in 1926 and 1927. Each had been given approximately fifteen acres of land, much of it quite fertile in comparison with land elsewhere in Greece, but still not enough for their needs.

Arriving in the village, the director of agriculture questioned the men, gathered in the coffeehouse, on the extent of the damage done by the rain and they agreed with him that the loss was not nearly so great as the Athens papers had stated in their morning editions. One of them was even frank enough to say, "Oh, you know how farmers are inclined to exaggerate their losses."

"But what about our pasture land?" one of the more aggressive peasants wanted to know. "We are supposed to get some from one of the Hadjilazaros estates. When will the government give it to us? We need it for our flocks."

Patiently the director explained that they would definitely receive this land but that it would take time. He said he felt the matter would be settled fairly soon since the expropriation — the most difficult part of the transaction — had already been completed. One peasant asked: "How could the owner manage to sell some of the estates to be expropriated before the government took them over? This gives the government less to distribute."

The director pointed out that in any sweeping law like the land reform there were often legal loopholes. These were being closed, but the landowner had been able to use them to his advantage. "Remember," he added, "the present government is really interested in enforcing the law and you will get your pasture land." [13]

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The land hunger so vigorously expressed by these villagers in the middle of some of the best land of Greece was due partly to their social origins. Added to the conservatism, the moderate pessimism, and longing for land common to most rural people, there was another factor: when they had lived in Turkey, deep in the interior, they had had all the land they could use. Turkey is less densely populated than Greece. Some Thomai peasants even longed to return to Turkey, so much had they idealized the earlier years before their forced exodus. Yet they admitted that in the 1920s in Turkey they had used primitive methods, plowing with a wooden rather than a steel plowshare; many had lived in caves. Significantly, they admitted also that in this part of Greece they had found agriculture more advanced, but it was an admission of a fact to which they could not adjust. Compared to the more flexible peasants of the refugee villages of Northern Greece, these Thomai villagers were reluctant to change; their nostalgia for the

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Thessaly

423 178 past and discontent with the present was a compensation for their feeling of inferiority to the other villagers about them. Their slowness to adopt anything new showed up in small ways. Noting that the flies were bad at the café, I asked them what they thought of DDT. "Oh, that's wonderful," they said. "The English brought in DDT just at the end of the war and for two years we weren't bothered with flies at all. But now the flies are back and I guess we'll have to put up with them." Flies, of course, were only a minor irritation. They complained of many greater difficulties.

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423 "We are becoming overpopulated. We are increasing. A person with seven children can't feed them properly on fifteen acres. If we tried to stop children from coming someone would say that we were being anti-religious."

And then another added, "If we only get our pasture land, we will be content."

"Are you sure of that?" someone asked. "If you had one hundred fifty acres instead of fifteen, wouldn't you still think that too little? Isn't that human nature?"

The director, perhaps to even up the score of what was a trying experience for him, sent a parting shot which made the men grin sheepishly: "Really, now, this talk of your getting the pasture land is a little beside the point. Actually, you are already profiting from this land, since — contrary to the law — you are now letting your animals pasture there during the night in the belief that nobody knows what you are doing. But let us hope that soon the land will be yours and you won't have to try to be so clever."

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521 The frank, rather acrid discussion ended, as most Greek café arguments do, with at least the appearance of good humor.

423 241 Thomai in Thessaly pointed up one aspect of land reform — land redistribution. However, no matter how disturbed the Thomai peasant became about it, the crucial aspect of land reform in Greece today is not redistribution. The government has scraped bottom in its search for more land for the peasants. What is more desperately needed, from the standpoint of efficient farm management, is the concentration of an owner's scattered strips into one compact holding which can be worked as a unit.[14] One traditional way of decreasing the disadvantages of the divided holdings is the *domka* system of Thessaly, Macedonia, and Thrace under which the entire area of the community is divided into three sections.[15] In any given year all of the land owned by the various families of the community in one section is planted with the predominant crop, a second section lies fallow for a year, and the third section is kept fallow for a longer period and is used for pasture. Obviously the abandonment of the fallow part of the rotation cycle and the increasing use of cover crops or fertilized commercial crops makes the domka system outmoded.

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1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Thessaly

Another village in Thessaly tackled this crucial problem of strip holdings in its own way. This village, Nees Karyes, south of Larissa on the main road to Lamia, was another place the director of agriculture wished to visit. On our way there we picked up the agriculturist who, like a county agent, had been the chief adviser to the peasants while they were planning their successful scheme. He recounted the development of the program as we drove to the village. The people of Nees Karyes, like those of Thomai, were also refugees, but they had come to Greece much earlier, in 1907, from Eastern Roumelia, now a part of Bulgaria. Otherwise, they were ordinary villagers, some with more land, some with less. It was the peasants with less who devised a plan.

After World War II, they realized that they could no longer make ends meet with what they had. In May 1952 twenty-three of the men with the smallest holdings in the village came together to talk about what would happen if they pooled their farms and other resources. The land of these 23 families totaled about 575 acres, showing an average per family below that for the other 200 families in the village, but well above the figure for Thessaly. They talked and talked, swapped ideas and contacted the agricultural-extension agent in Larissa. In October 1952 they held their first assembly. They decided to buy a tractor and to follow the advice of the agricultural specialist as to improved methods, type of seed, kind of equipment needed. They decided to combine the 575 acres for production purposes into one farm. The various types of soil are now used to best advantage. Fortunately, the first year had been a good crop year and successes far outstripped expectations. The cooperative into which they organized themselves bought a combine for 60,000 drachmas ($4,000 at the rate of exchange in 1952). But since they would have had to pay out five sixths of that to others as charges for harvesting their grain, they are in reality only 10,000 drachmas ($667) in debt, and sure of the future.

Since this idea of pooling land sounded so much like a collective farm on the Communist model, the government carefully investigated to be sure no subversive influences were at work before it granted any loans. The planners proved to be far from subversive, merely independent peasants with a common-sense approach to an old, old problem.

Our first stop in the village was at a big brick-walled granary almost completed by the cooperative. There we talked with the villager who was the cooperative's secretary. He paid great tribute to the part the government agricultural worker had played in the success of their undertaking. While we fingered the heaped golden grain on the cement floor of the impressive building, I asked, "What made you begin this cooperative in the first place?" The answer was a single eloquent word: "Necessity."

The founders of this cooperative, the twenty-three village families with

1:Sanders Z-5/4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

the smallest holdings, must have found sweet consolation in knowing that now many of their more advantaged village neighbors wish to join the cooperative pool. But this poses a problem. "How," the secretary asked anxiously, "can we calculate what arrangement to make with these people? How can we know what to charge them for the risk we took, the major expenses we bore? Certainly, now that we have succeeded, it would not be fair for them to come in and benefit free of cost from the pioneering work that we have done."

As these cooperative members talked of their plans, their eyes glowed with happiness and enthusiasm. The men had concrete proposals to solve other problems. They expect to shift from sole concentration upon grain production to more diversified farming, including livestock and poultry production, the raising of dry legumes and other crops that tend to give employment to the able-bodied members of the cooperating families.

International recognition as well as scientific farming is coming to Nees Karyes. Today there are people from Yugoslavia and Israel, as well as touring Americans, who have seen the way some of the peasant families in this village of Thessaly set about solving their problem of too little land in too many strips cultivated in unscientific ways. The secret of this undertaking, in great part at least, lies in the feeling of responsibility on the part of those who participate, since they originated and now conduct and plan for the cooperative which they jointly own.

Pressure on the Land

Most rural Greeks, however, struggle along with insufficient resources and with no cooperative venture such as Nees Karyes to give them hope. A village cobbler from Karpenesi in Central Greece explained the matter in this way: "There has been such an increase in population that the fields are no longer sufficient. The village child today lives more poorly than did his father as a child, because there are more mouths to feed and no added resources."

A well-informed Greek official put the problem in excellent perspective: "Today there is less income per family, less food, and the land values go up. Those that have more land become better off, leading to totally new economic and social distinctions in the villages. Many of our farmers are trying to make a living on such small farms that all they produce is hate. The main problem of the Greek farm family is the population problem. There are too many people. The villager with nothing to do has no place to go in search of work. That is why you see here in Athens many strong, healthy men selling matches. They have no work to do either in their villages or here in the city."

What the Greek villagers are up against in one part of the Peloponnesos is revealed in *Greece, Ripe for Improvement:*

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

more acutely and will find it harder to raise the level of living in many of the depressed areas of the country.

Land Use in Greece

What each peasant does with his own birthright of land adds up to the use Greece as a whole makes of her soil resources.[10] We may not be able to spot the patterns of ownership from observing the countryside, but we can see what is being grown and can check casual impressions against the official figures. Of 100 acres, 25 are used for agriculture, 15 are in forest, and the remaining 60 are in scrub, settlements, poor natural pasture, or just plain rock, gravel, or swamp. Roads, however, tend to take the observer through the areas where the land is cultivated and where many fields lie close together. In such areas, if we look only at the agricultural land, out of every 100 acres we would see 46 acres in grain, 5 in other food crops, 4 in industrial crops (cotton, tobacco, and so on), 25 in orchards and gardens, and 20 acres lying fallow. In the farm areas of the United States we would not find so high a proportion of fallow land, nor so much in orchards and gardens; instead, there would be more land in temporary meadows and in forage crops, because of our greater emphasis on livestock even though we have only about 27 acres out of each 100 in agricultural land, close to the Greek figure of 25. Our forest area takes up 32 acres (double that of Greece) and all other uses, 41 acres.

When we think of the land hunger of many Greeks, and the insufficient diet they get from their harvests, we wonder if there is any way to change these statistics. Is there more arable land available than 25 out of each 100 acres? Is there possibility of better use? Two studies, one Greek and one American, supply partial answers for those concerned about the peasant and his handful of earth.

Greece Today, a publication of the National Bank of Greece and Athens, in a 1954 article on Greek agriculture, points out that the available land is inadequately exploited owing to lack of funds. Only 7.8 percent of the agricultural land is irrigated; 11.5 percent is under mechanized cultivation; and chemical fertilizers, although used in twice the quantity of a few years ago, still cover not more than 25 percent of the cultivated land. Furthermore, when Greece is compared with 14 other European countries, the yield of Greek agriculture, expressed in gross income per unit of area, is 63 percent below, livestock production is 44 percent below, and the productivity of the labor of the Greek farmer is 48 percent below the respective average for these countries.

A study made by the American Mission for Aid to Greece indicates that much more efficient use could be made of the so-called idle lands, most of which are owned or administered by the state.[10] They were obtained in the population exchange of 1922–24, and from the Chams (*Tsamides* is

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

the Greek for this Albanian Moslem minority) and Communists when they fled Greece, from Italian reparations and the relinquishment of some lands by the royal family. These government-controlled lands total from one fourth to one third of all of the agricultural land in the country, and many of them are so inefficiently administered that they are not producing at anywhere near their full capacity. Some of the abuses often cited are:

Tenants have not been able to get title to land they have been working for thirty years.

Land and orchards have been auctioned for a one-year period to nonoperating individuals who sublet to peasants on crop-sharing basis, with both parties having little interest in maintaining soil fertility.

Large tracts of fertile farmland have been leased year after year for grazing purposes, either because of political pressure by stock owners or simply because of inefficient and shortsighted administration.

Other lands, idle for years, have suffered devasting damage from flood, for dikes and drainage ditches have not been maintained.

Orchards containing hundreds of thousands of olive and fruit trees have gone untended and unpruned for years.

Whether the problem lies in the lack of funds, as the National Bank claims, or in poor administrative practices, as the American Mission claims, or in both, it is obvious that there is much work ahead for those planning the more complete use of the Greek birthright in land and wanting to satisfy the peasant's desperate need for life-sustaining work.

The significance of land is shown in the importance of agricultural products in the total economy of the country. Let us look at the export figures for 1956–57. Out of the $213 million of exports, about $187.5 million, or 88 percent, was in agricultural products (cotton, tobacco, grapes, raisins, apples, and so on). The balance of $25.5 million represented mainly exports of chemicals, textiles, ores, and industrial raw materials.[20] These figures show that land is important not merely to the peasant but to all Greece as she today seeks to find markets abroad in order to get foreign exchange to import raw materials and finished products not available within her borders.

The rural Greeks, quite unconsciously on their part, remind us that one of life's basic relationships is that of man to the land.[21] In many studies I have made of rural people, I have found that this is a crucial focus, which many specialists from industrialized societies are apt to minimize or overlook, much to their disadvantage. To some peasants, still steeped in tradition, the earth is holy and is not treated in the light of modern knowledge to make it more productive; other peasants are taking up scientific agriculture and in doing so tend to think of the soil as a commodity. If tradition holds too tightly, which it probably will not do among the energetic Greek

1:Sanders Z-5½ (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

423 241 178

villagers, then conservatism and lack of progress will handicap the peasant; if, on the other hand, the man-land bond becomes too abruptly broken, a rural proletariat will come into existence and will make demands beyond the capacity of the country to provide.

The golden mean would call for such a balancing of forces that Greek villagers, proud of their rural heritage but aware of steps necessary to improve their economic and educational position, would grow stronger with the passing of time. For some the answer to greater economic stability would lie in higher yields per acre through fertilization and better farming practices; in other cases mechanization may prove an aid, as would more efficient irrigation or marketing facilities and lower interest rates. Along with the economic remedies, whatever they prove to be, a sense of psychological security will develop in the peasant if he thinks of himself as a landowner and gets prestige and satisfaction from the intelligent way he treats his land. Linked to this, however, must be the feeling that he — the villager — is not Greece's forgotten or neglected man, but that those engaged in agriculture are viewed by policy makers as an important segment of national life. Individually and collectively, no people can afford the costly luxury of taking lightly their birthright of land.

1:Sanders Z-54 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Thessaly

241 near Thebes in Central Greece, had this to say: "The coming of a tractor
461 will 'rest a family.' They will have better yields due to more systematic
178 treatment and better plowing. Before, people had to work ten hours a day
462 while with a tractor they need to work from five to six hours at a maximum. The fact that they have to work less brings joy to the house, for a person who is rested has more of a mood for gaiety than one who is tired. The women certainly are helped for they do not have to be in the fields and can occupy themselves more with housework, with clothes, and can have more time for amusement."

241 Elsewhere I asked, "What difference does the machine make?" The di-
178 rector of the Larissa agricultural school answered this way:

> Twenty years ago this area around Larissa was in large *tsiflikia*, or estates, belonging to a very few families, which produced chiefly sheep. With the expropriation and redistribution of land there was a trend toward wheat, corn, alfalfa, so much so that even the slopes where the sheep once grazed are now cultivated.

[407] Today Thessaly is the most mechanized area of Greece. In 1940 the plain around Larissa had 160 tractors; now the number is well over 1300. [Greece in 1952 had 5400 tractors and in 1956 over 12,000 compared with 1700 in 1938.][8]

[727] The war, the occupation, and the guerrilla conflict brought an equality in
[492] that everyone lost their animals. Then, those who were able to buy tractors — chiefly those who had had the animals before the war — gained an economic
[423] advantage. Before mechanization the peasant used to toil and sweat over his land and get very little from it; now with mechanization people become more attached to the land since they see that they can make a profit from it. Those who before would have sold now hold on to it. The merchants in town complain
[454] that there is a crisis, but there is none really, for the peasant is putting all of his spare money into fields and more equipment. Now he is farming in a scientific way.

At this point his wife, who had been sitting in the living room with us, began to speak. She owned some land which she had not visited for three years because of illness. When she did visit the peasants who worked this land for her, she found that they were telling her all kinds of things that she needed to do — to use fertilizer, which they had formerly thought unnecessary, and machinery, with which they had been unacquainted before. She attributed much of the recent adoption of machinery to the great movement of people during the war.

[476] Her husband then pointed out that today there was a greater and finer spirit of competition among the farmers than formerly, for they try to see who can get a greater yield. Mechanization leaves them more time for edu-
[461] cation and learning about new practices. It used to take a whole day for a peasant to plow less than an acre with two horses but now he can do ten

1:Sanders Z-54 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Thessaly

acres a day with a tractor. "Before the war," he went on to say, "a peasant who tried something new was considered an amusing person with a loose screw in his head. Even the agriculturists were received with 'what have those educated people got to tell us who have callouses from working?' Also, the agriculturist has learned more about agriculture and more about people, changing for the better."

The director's wife agreed with what we had learned from Alekos about the effect of mechanization upon woman's work. She did point out that machine harvesting and threshing had relieved the housewife of an old burden of feeding many people for long periods of time when the work was done by hand. However, the women still plant tobacco and cultivate cotton. Men are helping out a little more, but this hard field work in Thessaly is still a woman's job. Here again there is some compensation for the women. Although they have as much work now as before, they have more money. They will change into better dresses in the evening and go for a walk on a weekday, something much less common before the last war. Finally, the director's wife pointed out, those families who own twenty to twenty-five acres of land have acquired ease and prosperity and are becoming a well-to-do peasantry.

Elsewhere around Larissa we inquired about the spread of mechanization. The tractor dealers in the town put Alekos' problems in a somewhat different light. We learned, for example, that a 46-horsepower tractor, with starter and pneumatic tire wheels, cost 55,000 drachmas ($3,667); the purchaser had to pay 40 percent in cash and could sign a bill for the remaining 60 percent, payable after 18 months to the Bank of Greece at the rate of 16 percent interest. Dealers and some of the local government officials considered this rate most oppressive.

A second problem was that of spare parts, most of which had to be imported. Foreign-exchange difficulties and import restrictions make this difficult; when the parts were not available, the owner of the tractor was greatly inconvenienced, to put it mildly. We got some idea of the problem of spare parts when we learned that there were 25 dealers of tractors of different makes in Larissa alone. The dealers attempted to teach the purchasers how to use the machine and, a year or so before, the government had set up traveling schools which instructed in the operation and care of the tractor and afterwards gave examinations for licenses. That year, out of 1,200 farm workers examined, only 700 were given a license.

Dealers also indicated that the buyer of a tractor usually ordered a plow and a disk-harrow, with many requesting grain drills. This equipment adds greatly to the total cost. Most of the tractors were bought by individuals or by a group of three to five peasants, with only twenty to twenty-five tractors belonging to cooperatives.

In the tractor land of Larissa everything seems fine now. As in the case

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

Tobacco Growing in Thrace

During an interview with some peasants in the office of the commune secretary of Toxotae in Thrace during May 1955, I was surprised to see some of the men pull out pink cigarette paper in which they expertly rolled cigarettes for a leisurely smoke.

"But why the pink paper?" I wanted to know.

"We are tobacco producers," they answered with an air of distinct pride. "We can keep some of the crop for our own use, but must use pink paper to distinguish our cigarettes from those that are bought."

"Yes," a gendarme added. "Any time I see a person smoking a pink cigarette I can go up to ask for a certificate showing that he is a tobacco grower and thus entitled to 'roll his own'!"

This conversation, which lasted for more than four hours, gave me an even better understanding of tobacco farming than I had gained on previous trips, as did frequent visits in the fields with the peasants who were transferring the plants from the seedbeds to the carefully prepared land or hauling barrels of water in their oxcart from a spring or well to the place where the planting was going on. What was most helpful of all, however, was the intimate story of one tobacco village, as described in the Near East Foundation study mentioned earlier. It gave me a deeper realization of the problems that the people there continue to face.[7]

Dafnon, a village of 1145 people in 1952, is northwest of the city of Xanthe. This community, like so many in Northern Greece, was settled by Greek refugees from Asia Minor and the Pontus following the departure of 127 Turkish families in 1924. By 1935, 294 families had moved in, attracted as they were by the rich vegetation, the good climate of this semimountainous area, and the possibility of raising a high-priced product such as tobacco. When the first official land redistribution was carried out in 1935, and a second in 1938, it became apparent that the allotments were too small for the support of a family, and so people began to leave. Today there are 255 families.

The village, covering slightly over 70 acres, sprawls over a hill. Two former Turkish mosques have been converted into Greek Orthodox churches; six grocery shops have total assets of less than $1700; three of the six coffeehouses attract the young men because each has a gramophone and a battery radio; the village school, destroyed along with many of the houses during the guerrilla war in 1948, was rebuilt in 1950. Outside the village is an athletic field on which 30 young men, members of the sports club, practice faithfully in an effort to uphold their reputation as the best football (soccer) team in the area. In the evening, the streets are dark, for Dafnon has no electricity and its people must rely upon kerosene lamps.

Of the 255 families previously mentioned, 220 own land; 32 own no

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Thrace

land but work rented land or as farm laborers; and three are in business (baker, coffeehouse proprietor, and dressmaker). Some of these landowners, in addition to farming, run a local business, or practice a trade such as carpentering and smithing, but their basic orientation is toward the land.

Being farmers, one might assume that they could grow some of their own food. A few manage to do this. Of the 589 acres of cultivated land belonging to the village people, 338 acres are in tobacco. This cash crop, therefore, takes up about 57 percent of all arable land. Corn accounts for 187 acres, vegetable gardens 25 acres, potatoes 20 acres, alfalfa 6 acres, and other crops 13 acres. But no matter what methods one uses in Dafnon, it is impossible to grow enough food for 1145 people on the shallow land. There are two ways out: first, grow a cash crop such as tobacco, sell it, and use the income to buy food and other necessities; the second is for a large number of families to be resettled elsewhere and thus provide sufficient land for those that remain. The latter suggestion is impossible, since other rural areas are also overcrowded and the opportunities in the cities are not yet equal to the demand of those making the exodus from the rural areas. Indeed, cities have been discouraging the influx of new families in search of work.

This leaves only the other possibility of getting most of the family income from tobacco alone. Here, again, the tobacco producer is caught at the mercy of the market or in the "price scissors." Without food of his own production, he has to sell his tobacco at any price offered simply in order to have bread for his children. The producer, according to this study of Dafnon, knew that tobacco prices, including the premium paid by the state, had risen over prewar prices 260 times. This was small consolation for, in reading *Vema,* an Athenian newspaper dated December 14, 1951, he also learned that costs of foodstuffs had risen 425 times, clothing 554 times, fuel 394 times, sundries 367 times, manufactured goods 467 times, and imported supplies 416 times.

It is difficult to grow tobacco, particularly the Oriental type (Basmas variety) that requires so much manipulation, leaf by leaf, with an average leaf being four inches long and two and one-half inches wide. The first plowing is usually done in February or March. Seedbeds are heavily manured, and the seed is well mixed with sand and ashes, then sown. The beds are pressed down by foot for better germination; sieved manure is scattered over them; and the beds are watered. This watering is continued, usually morning and evening, until the end of May when the plants are ready to be transplanted. Because of this need for water, the beds are always located near some accessible water supply.

The tobacco fields are usually plowed under three times before the tobacco plants are set out. The same fields are used for tobacco year after

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Peloponnesos

chipped glasses from the dark basement of a roofless building which was serving as the office of the village council.

Around the Valtetsi school that morning were children curious about the strange adults, the car, and the ten-year-old American boy and the twelve-year-old English-speaking Greek boy in our party, who quickly established contact and were soon surrounded. Questions and answers about the children came naturally. When we talked to the two teachers, we began to see what migration meant to these shepherd children. The school year starts in September with everyone enrolled, but by December 1 the youngsters have all set off with their families on the seven- to ten-day tramp below. St. Demetrios' Day (October 28) is the traditional date for departure, and St. George's Day (April 23) is the date for the return. Nevertheless, school opens again on March 1. This year (1953) four pupils had been present then; a week later ten showed up; at the time of our visit business was picking up even more and before long would reach the expected 104 enrollment. Classes would continue to August 15, with only a small break before the September registration occurred.

During the winter pasturing, the children attend no school but help with the flocks as much as they can. We had often during the winter months seen these solitary shepherd children as we drove along a lowland road. As they stood motionless when our car approached, with the sheep and the goats climbing around them, their faded shapeless clothing melting into the barren hillside, they looked neither frightened nor submissive and were quick to respond to a wave or a greeting. Later on, I asked the men with whom I was talking where most of the children were born, in Valtetsi or down below. One of them replied, much to the merriment of his fellows, "They are usually born here, for it's here that the heat wave starts." One man, the proud father of nine, said that all of his had been born in Valtetsi, although each knew of occasions when a child had arrived on the roadside without the ministrations of even a midwife. We asked young and old alike in Valtetsi and elsewhere what the children thought of this semi-annual change. All agreed that such a life was hard on children and that many of them dreaded the long march, but that there was no other livelihood open to their parents.

Since Valtetsi is at an altitude of 3360 feet, its hillsides are too exposed to make the pasturing of many sheep possible; in the winter months, removal to the plains below is therefore the only course of action open to the livestock owner. The families owning goats leave first, since the goats cannot stand the cold and they bear young earlier than do the sheep. Here in Valtetsi, the men pointed out, most of the pastures were communally owned and cost the people nothing; but down below each family had to contract with some peasant proprietor or commune for sufficient pasture for his flock, which now averages about 100 sheep in contrast to the 400

1:Sanders Z-54 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Vlachs EH15

we ate, we watched the milking going on nearby. There was a rhythmic pitter-patter as the milk was squirted into the big receptacles. Each animal was named according to some physical characteristic, corresponding to "Brownie," "Dotty," "Blackie," or after some person whom the shepherd thought the sheep resembled. As the men sat there we asked them how they milked when it rained. They told us that they simply put on their heavy waterproof capes and kept right on milking.

Some of the sheep were sheared. We learned that the shearing was done below (on the plains) and sold unwashed for "it weighs more with the oil in it." The unsheared animals were simply carrying up to the summer camp the supply of wool that the women would need to use in making their blankets and heavy garments. Some of the animals were sheared in various symmetrical patterns, a style of decoration which pleases the children, so the older people said. These fancy designs are not nearly so common now as formerly, according to Berates.

Despite the magnificent mountain setting and the fascinating activities going on in the fire-lit darkness, the conversation itself — focusing on the present problems facing nomadic peoples — stands out most vividly as I look back upon this evening. Since my central interest was social change, I welcomed the turning of the talk into such a channel.

Without any doubt, the life of the nomad is getting more difficult every year. A major problem had already been brought out in many conversations along the roads of Greece as well as with the people of Valtetsi: land on the plains below is no longer so available as it used to be. Scientific agriculture is winning the day and pastoralism is on the way out. But Berates and his men were most bitter about the difficulties they faced on the road between summer and winter pastures. We had noticed the many signs represented by a pile of stones perhaps a foot high or by tufts of straw twisted onto a branch, warning the nomad not to trespass. These signs were numerous even as one approached and entered the mountain areas. That was why the men had had to drive in one day the sheep all the way from Kalpaki to Konitsa, using routes shorter than the main road but nevertheless arriving late at night. Tired from this experience, they felt such a long march to be most unfair. One man said, "Here in the mountains a peasant will sow only one oka of seed in a field so he will have an excuse to keep us out."

The field policeman, who serves a commune although under the authority of the central government, patrols his beat most vigorously during these days of migration. He not only sees that the animals keep out of the forbidden fields, but also enforces the custom that no nomad family camp in one place longer than twenty-four hours. But most field policemen are quite ready to show the nomads where they can find a camp site in the event some old one is no longer available, for these guards expect a tip — a box of cigarettes or "whatever one has the pleasure to give," as Berates put it.

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Vlachs EH15

[The Tselingata]

used for public works, especially for the operation of schools. All these accounts are regulated by the general assembly of the members of the union.

In my conversations with Berates, the visit to whom has just been described, I learned that he considered himself an architselingas. True enough, he owned most of the sheep, but he did allow the six men who worked for him to have flocks of their own, say fifty to sixty head, if they could get a start. One of his shepherds was assigned the task of keeping the records of milk production so that each one could have a share prorated on the basis of the number of animals in the common flock. Every six months Berates draws up a contract with those associated with him; he supervises the cheese production up in the highland pastures and even helps process the milk for some of the smaller owners who are not in position to set up their own plant.

Those who knew Epirus a generation or so ago tell of the great authority these chief shepherds had, each ruling in autocratic fashion his people and the area in which they were established. Should one of the shepherds associated with any of these chieftains become dissatisfied and want to move away, he found it impossible to attach himself to any other chief shepherd, for these men of position stuck together. In the days of turmoil and disorder early in this century, it was almost necessary for a small owner to be connected in some way with a leading figure who could protect him and represent him to outside authorities.[14]

The tselingata, from many accounts, were not necessarily based on kinship, though there were interesting examples of the group of relatives being so large that they formed a union by themselves. In such a case, age and generation would usually determine who had the authority and his word would carry great weight among the others.

Even today there are powerful chief shepherds. The mayor of the city of Egoumenitsa, along the Ionian Sea, was the head of the Petoules family which is run on the principles of the traditional tselingata. There are eighty members in the family and all of them obey him. In 1953 I was told that the Petoules family collectively owned from 12,000 to 14,000 sheep, in spite of the fact that on one day in 1948 the Communist guerrillas took 4,200 sheep from them. Although they owned sufficient land to graze at least 14,000 sheep, they were improving the pastures by sowing wild clover. The summer area alone added up to about 3,450 acres and the winter area was additional.

One official in describing this family said that in 1952 some of the governmental representatives in Ioannina were ordered by the central government to go to the head of the Petoules family and take some of the pasture land for the settlement of refugees who needed land. They expected trouble but were pleasantly surprised when the architselingas agreed to give the land and also went with them to select it. Two villages were constructed,

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

to graze all over the community area as soon as the harvest is in. If the farmers leave any grain in the fields after harvesting, the sheep seem to think it part of their daily ration and tackle it with delight. The farmers have little recourse, since the sheep owners are elected as community councilmen and officers of the cooperative and are always in a position to defend their interests.

Much the same situation prevails in a village near Agrinion where over seven thousand sheep and over one thousand goats are kept. Recently, some of what was formerly pasture land has been distributed to those without land, through a cooperative association newly formed for that purpose, thus restricting the amount of grazing area. These new owners, as well as others without livestock, resent the invasion of their fields by the flocks immediately after harvest. Little control can be exercised unless shepherds so desire, for none of the parcels are fenced off and it is customary to let the animals roam at will when crops are in.

The nomarch of Serrai stated that in his area of Macedonia it was very common for the whole community to rise up in protest against the pasturing of the flocks by shepherds on land belonging to the community. The shepherds insist that they will continue to use these lands; so the villagers come to the nomarch and ask whether or not they must let those so-and-sos graze sheep on their land. The nomarch assures them that they are within their rights to keep the shepherds off, and they leave the office with a determined look, as though no number of shepherds could budge them from their resolve. When these local leaders get back home, some shepherd comes up to them and says: "My sheep will die, my family will die if you don't let me use that land." The people then change their minds and give the shepherd permission to graze his flocks there. Later on, when they see the nomarch and he asks them what happened, they say: "Poor man, we couldn't let him starve, so we let the sheep graze there." But such disputes do not always end so amicably.

Another source of conflict is the lowly goat. The parties to the conflict are not peasants arguing it out with one another, but rather the forest service trying to forbid the peasants from keeping goats. During the dictatorship of General Metaxas (1936–1941), a law was passed and enforced which forbade the peasants from keeping goats. The justification for this measure is that goats, a browsing animal, do much more damage to the forests than do sheep, a grazing animal. In the case of a pastoral village in Western Macedonia, not far from Kastoria, the prewar number of eight thousand sheep and goats shrank during the conflict because of requisition by the guerrillas, army of occupation, and such, to seven hundred and fifty. In order to rebuild livestock numbers quickly as a means of eking out a living, the people got together flocks of goats. The Agricultural Office has supported them in this, while the Forestry Office opposes the idea. The

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

585 the return from the church and then distributes the pieces to the guests. In the same place, an open lock is placed in the groom's pocket before he goes to the church, and it is shut tight during the ceremony to signify that the union will not be broken.

585 178 Another widespread custom is the attempt on the part of the bride to try to step on the groom's foot during the ceremony when she has to promise to obey; being forewarned, the groom tries to step on her foot, for this is supposed to show who will be the boss of the new home. Couples who want to appear modern agree in advance not to compete in this respect, although in ceremonies around Larissa it is not unusual for the groom's friends to call out to him to be sure the bride does not step on his foot. Another touch of modernity is the honeymoon to Athens, which some of the couples in the more prosperous villages of Thessaly think an important part of getting married.

591 583 [423] As would be expected, each couple wishes to move into a house of its own. In some parts of Thrace, where there is still communal land, a plot may be given to a young man on which to build a house; or he may find room for a new dwelling not far from the parental home, providing the house is his responsibility and not the girl's. The determining factor, however, is the cost of building a new home. Elsewhere in Greece, if the bride brings enough gold sovereigns, they may be used to help pay for the cost of a home; or if the bride brings a new house, as she does in the islands, then the couple is set up for separate housekeeping.

In the Peloponnesos, where there is no longer much communal land, it is not unusual for the bride's parents to provide a strip of land on which a new home is to be built. In the dowry discussions they agree to give money to the future son-in-law in two stages: first, an amount sufficient for the construction of the house which he builds according to the girl's wishes and after much discussion with her. This sum must be spent on the house. The second installment is in land or money to cover the cost of furnishing the new home. The young man has the responsibility for seeing that the house is built, but the house belongs to the bride.

591 596 [177] Where there is no new home available, it is most common for patrilocal residence to follow, and the girl must learn to adjust to the family circle of her husband. But the Greek peasant is practical enough to decide each case on its merits. If the girl's family has greater need of a man, then the couple will go to her home to live. For example, if the girl has no brother and she is to inherit her parents' house, then the couple go to live there. Only in a few parts of Northern Greece, where Slavic influence is found, do two or more married brothers live as a joint family with their elderly parents. In most Greek villages one of the brothers, often the eldest, inherits the ancestral home, and it is expected that the other brothers will manage to set up separate establishments.

1:Sanders Z-5.4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

courts. The village priest, therefore, acquires land and farms, in many cases just as diligently as the other villagers; he may even embark upon a few small-scale business enterprises on the side. His regular salary from the state gives him a steady income which the rest of the local people usually lack. This, combined with thrift and diligence, helps him acquire a little more property than the average farmer and enjoy a slightly higher standard of living. This is not guaranteed, of course, and one can call to mind many village priests who obviously were living on the barest minimum. At the same time, the priest is able to maintain what has been called a "comradely equality" with his people.[6]

The priest, however, is not necessarily a permanent fixture. The bishop appoints him to a post and the local congregation can refuse him, or it can raise objections to a bishop about a priest who conducts himself in ways the local people do not like. In most cases, the bishop tries to find the kind of priest that the local parishioners prefer. Since the priest often acquires land, as has been pointed out, he wants to pass that on to his children. He may try to persuade one son at least to follow him in the service of the church. In one Peloponnesian village I found that a priest's son now off at the seminary was coming back to succeed his father, thus making a fourth generation of priests from the same family serving that parish. When I mentioned this to bishops and others familiar with church matters, they pointed out that this was a common phenomenon, and even gave the names of villages where a fifth-generation member from the same family was ministering to the same parish.

Should a parish vacancy occur, the bishop, who is informed about it as a matter of course, announces in the local papers as well as in the church papers that there is a vacancy in such and such a village and that all qualified people may apply. He goes through the applications, selects the eligible candidates, and posts their names on the door of the cathedral, with the notice that anyone who knows any reason why these people should not serve as priests should inform the bishop. After due time has elapsed, he makes the choice, giving heavy weight, according to one bishop who discussed this, to educational qualifications and moral considerations.

In pursuing in greater detail the relationship between the parish priest and the state, I learned that it was under the leadership of Archbishop (Metropolitan) Damaskinos, who played such an important part in helping his country through the politically troubled waters from German occupation back to self-government, that the priests were put on a salary paid by the state. Before that, they had been paid from fees and also by products from the parishioners. *Kondota,* or the subscription by families of so much wheat, eggs, olive oil, and such, to the priest if he would serve them was widely practiced before the present salary arrangement was made. In round figures, the parishes now contribute about one fourth of the amount

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

the economic level of doctors or large storekeepers. Now this factor has diminished considerably concerning tobacco producers and has also affected smaller storekeepers, allowing less chance for them to expand their enterprises.[4]

He concludes that the ends of the "social pyramid became closer and it is difficult to separate the second from the third class, while the upper class became smaller." Land ownership and money, two factors which were stressed before the war, are no longer very important, for a peasant can rent a field quite inexpensively. With the prices of tobacco as low as they are, land is not in as great demand.

Village Organizations

Almost every village today has one or more clubs or associations which have been promoted by governmental officials and people from the city in an effort to effect some change in the rural way of life. Most of these organizations appear to be well intentioned and are accepted as such by the local people, but this does not mean that the peasants become eager joiners or loyal members. Other village groups have much deeper local roots: mutual-aid groups and the cooperatives; the church board, the school board, and the community council. In many villages I inquired about the formally organized groups. Three widely scattered communities listed a variety of associations, some of which will be described more fully below:

Ano Kleitoria (Peloponnesos): community council, church board, school board, and Friends of the Forest.

Kalivi (Attica): the regular boards, five cooperatives, agro club, hunting club, home-economics club.

Polygyros (Chalkidike, Macedonia): the regular boards, two cooperatives (agricultural, apiary), boy scouts, lawyers' union, athletic club, professional union, medical union, olive-oil union, woman's philanthropic group.

One widespread and rapidly growing organization is the Rural Youth Club, which is modeled on the 4-H Club in the United States and promoted and supervised by the Extension Service of the Greek Ministry of Agriculture. Each member carries out an agricultural project, and together they operate a field owned by the club. In the Macedonian village referred to they also operate the village library located in the community building. They meet once a week to listen to a lecture, which is followed by recreational activities.

The women, too, have their own club. It is the home club or home-economics club similar to the Home Demonstration Club in the United States. It includes farm and nonfarm women, young and old. When field work is slack, the members attend classes in canning, sewing, and cooking, several times a month. The home agent helps them acquire knowledge and skill through lectures, demonstrations, and group participation. Often the club has its own workship and kitchen.

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To suggest to a Greek that he needs aid in raising his standard of living because his ways are backward is to violate his *philotimo* as a person and as a Greek. There is need for aid now because of acts of God, not because of personal failure or Greek inadequacy. . . .

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One may well ask how this trait of self-esteem is related to a sense of community. The connection is twofold: first, the adult member of the community participates as a free agent and as an expression of his own individuality; he can cooperate because he feels free, and by the same token he can refuse to cooperate. But the second connection makes him think seriously before refusing to cooperate, for he would be shaming himself and others if he let his village down. Yet the sense of community need not be limited to formal cooperation; it can be a state of mind as well, a feeling of loyalty one carries about, and a deep psychological identification with the village where one was born and in which one grew up.

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A common living space. One writer attributes the unity of the Greek village to the residents' dependence upon their physical environment:

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First, the people are directly dependent on the land, hence their interests are all one. Second, the village owns grazing lands and meadows used in common by the farmers. Third, the people are highly interdependent in respect to water supply. Thus a sense of cooperation pervades the village. Fourth, the people of the village are limited in their actions by the very village's physical structure; the width of the streets, the pavement or lack of pavements, and degree of crookedness of same. Lastly, the whole physical lay-out is such that ceremonials and rituals as repeated year-in and year-out by slow processions, must change even if the ceremonials were to become mechanized.[6]

An earlier chapter on the village setting has discussed this factor, which must be taken into account in considering the identification people feel with their village. People develop a "sense of belonging" with those who walk the same village lanes, send their animals to the same community pastures, draw water from the same wells or fountains, and share the same living space. This propinquity does not necessarily produce a liking for everyone frequently encountered, but it calls for the recognition that these neighbors or fellow villagers must be dealt with in solving many of the ordinary affairs of life.

Shared institutions. Partly related to the physical pattern of the village are the church, the school, and the office of the local government, whose very structures are visible and concrete signs of the institutional complex which they embody. But these institutions are more than a material expression; they are also the focal points of the values which the people inherit and pass on to their children. On the basis of these, people ascribe rank to each other; on the basis of these, people make decisions relative to what activities are most worthy and which are least worthy. Community

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observers did not agree on this matter, nor was I able to conduct detailed studies; nevertheless, I gained the definite impression that what counted was not the size of the city so much as the location of family members who had sought work away from the village. They were often influential agents of change with their relatives back home. This has been more recently confirmed by the investigations of Ernestine Friedl in a Boeotian village:

> Considerable social mobility exists in Greece . . . but this mobility does not come at the expense of kinship ties. The family remains a strongly functioning unit in spite of the fact that its members may occupy different social positions and may live in many different communities — in villages, towns and cities. . . . Therefore, it is often the upwardly mobile members of his own family who link the villager to the national culture and the national social structure of Greece. As a result, not only are cultural and social changes expected in the village, but continuing urban influence is an integral part of village life.[1]

She then shows how the grown children, even though living in the city, still have some rights over the father's real property back in the village; the same applies to a son-in-law living elsewhere, because of his vested interest in the dowry in land which his wife brought to him and which is located back in the wife's village and perhaps farmed by one of her brothers living there. Dr. Friedl cites four mutually reinforcing patterns of Greek culture which make possible the continuing involvement of the members of the dispersed kinship group in matters of common concern: first, the amount of time that the Greeks spend in reaching a major decision. It will not be arrived at in a hurry and may take as much as a year or two of discussion. Second, Greeks consider visiting between country and a city kin a highly favored form of recreation for both parties. Third, this visitation is made possible by the willingness of the Greeks to double, triple, or quadruple up, sleeping on pallets when beds are insufficient. Fourth, the fact that the rural and urban people involved are kin to each other keeps down much of the suspicion and jealousy that rural people might have of the urban person, thus facilitating continuing interaction.

In personally witnessing this process I have wondered, but never investigated, whether those villagers most vigorous in their denunciation of Athens and city life were those who had no urban relatives.

But one should not overlook the influence that a change in one village has upon those in nearby villages. If the people of one community decide to put a neglected cemetery in order, then those elsewhere will say, "don't you think we had better do something about our cemetery?" and take steps accordingly, while trying to keep the fact that they are imitating the other village from being obvious. There is, thus, some competition among Greek villages, not an intense rivalry but a desire by those in one village to have

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

commercial farmer. To be sure, the peasant does use some money, and some colonial powers in the past have found that the way to persuade "natives" to grow cash crops that the authorities wanted for export was to require that taxes be paid in money rather than in kind. To get the money, the peasant had to put in some cash crop, and he eventually moved toward commercial farming. Both types of farmers periodically become involved in debt: the peasant because he wants to spend an extravagant amount on some village festival, wedding, dowry, pilgrimage, or other noneconomic expenditure, whereas the modern farmer — though he also may try to keep up with the Joneses — goes into debt to buy machinery and other capital equipment. The peasant in earlier days went to the village moneylender, whose rates were oppressively high since he as a debtor could give little collateral, but now under government auspices credit cooperatives are moving out to the villages to provide loans to the villager on his livestock or an expected harvest. The modern farmer uses the financial institutions which are an integral part of a complex economy.

The production for a market highlights another difference. The peasant is primarily oriented toward the present; the modern farmer thinks of the future. The peasant, because he has had little economic margin with which to experiment or accumulate, tries to get through one crop year at a time. He may think vaguely about the future in terms of the hopes he has for his children, but seldom in hardheaded economic terms. When he begins to put out vines, to plant olive trees, or to make capital investment connected with agricultural production, the peasant is changing into a farmer — in this one trait, at least.

Both the peasant and the farmer operate in terms of what they consider to be their own self-interest, but they differ in their conceptions of what their self-interest is. The so-called obstinacy of the peasant is not just irrational opposition to change for the sake of holding back progress; it arises from his refusal to believe that the innovation suggested is to his own self-interest. Many times the peasant shrewdness shows up when some new scientific practice fails because of the soil and weather conditions of a given area. Demonstration, rather than talk, works more effectively with the peasant. The farmer, on the other hand, is more willing to take the word of the agricultural specialist, whether spoken or written, and may even do some experimenting on his own. If he is moderately successful, he has a margin for experimentation, whereas the peasant's food supply or source of the cash that he needs would be jeopardized if the innovation proved unsuccessful. Rather than fly to evils that he "knows not of," he sticks with the ways that have helped his people survive through the centuries.

This same conservatism shows up in the peasant's attitude toward his land. The peasant prizes land above all else, whereas the farmer views it as a commodity to be bought and sold. Land has been the peasant's secur-

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

ity; if he has a few acres available to him he knows that he can put in a crop and maintain life; without land he is helpless. That is why many peasants will insist on buying more land when they get a sum of money. The modern farmer, on the other hand, views land as only one of the factors of production. He can be quite impersonal toward particular patches of land, whereas in some countries the peasants feel closely attached to family acres handed down through two, three, or more generations. Peasant fathers, too, feel a strong sense of obligation to pass on to their children the patrimony of land intact, if possible. At times, this is even more important than providing the children with an education or a respectable dwelling. The modern farmer may feel much more security in the cash balances in the bank or in the improvements made on the land he has rather than the acquisition of more land simply for the sake of adding acreage to his estate.

Perhaps the most visible contrasts, as one passes from a peasant farming belt to one of modern farms, is the presence of machinery in the latter. The peasant relies on family labor to help not only with ordinary daily tasks but as much as possible to meet the needs at peak periods, such as harvest time. Any money given to outsiders who help is that much taken away from the family exchequer. This means that a peasant with many children is considered blessed over one with few, for the many sons especially are economic assets, though daughters help until they are married off as members of their husbands' family labor reserve. As Chapter 5 has shown, the purchase of a tractor by a Greek farm family ushers in numerous changes. Arthur Mosher, who is familiar with agriculture both in the Far East and in Latin America, points out the following consequences of shifting from family labor to machinery.[8] First, by reducing the labor requirements it frees members of the family for work in the city and may even necessitate their search for employment away from the village — a fact which introduces change into what may have been a closed family circle. Second, there is sometimes a change in status of the sons and younger men of the family who, unlike the older men, know how to operate the newly acquired machine. In peasant families, where the word of the older people, especially the father, has been law and where there is supposed to be unquestioned obedience to his directives, the emergence of a new technical "authority" in the family is bound to produce changes in the family relationships. A third effect of mechanization treated by Mosher is the creation of greater socioeconomic disparity between large and small farms, since mechanization is usually more economical on large farms. This tendency of the rich to get richer and the poor to get poorer is sometimes offset, however, by the poorer farmers pooling their resources and setting up a small joint-ownership group, similar to some of the threshing "rings" of the American Midwest a generation or so ago. Or the small farmers may get the advantages of mechanization if the machines can be rented to them when needed,

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Vasilika

The Area Surrounding Vasilika

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The inhabitants of Vasilika, as the village will henceforth be called, are farmers and shepherds. The farmers cultivate the land in the plains adjacent to the low-lying ridge on which most of the houses are built. As a consequence of the dowry and inheritance system in the region, some of the fields near Vasilika are owned by farm families in neighboring villages, and the Vasilika farmers own some lands in other sections of the Boeotian plain and even in the surrounding foothills. By and large, however, the inhabitants cultivate lands of the

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quality characteristic of the Boeotian plains. These lie in East Central Greece, north and west of the smaller plains of Attica. The flat land of Boeotia is one of Greece's few regions of moist, fertile soil. The Kiphisus river once flowed through the whole area, but earth movements and the porous limestone of the region, which permits underground drainage, have broken the continuity of the river's flow. The upper stream flows through a narrow mountain-bordered valley and then into a wide plain which was once covered by Lake Copais. The river is silt-laden, and the underground channels through which the water escapes tend to get blocked up. The land can not always absorb the waters of the winter rainy season as rapidly as they accumulate. Thus an especially wet winter can flood the fields so badly that they do not drain off in time for spring planting

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(Newbigin 1949:333). A system of controlling the waters exists for the land reclaimed by draining Lake Copais. However, the cultivated fields of Vasilika lie some miles past this region, and although the Kiphisus flows through their fields, the farmers have no method of draining off excess water. Consequently,

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they watch the winter rains with some apprehension. On the other hand, the regular winter flooding in ordinary years, along with the accumulation of alluvium enriched by humus, makes the soil suitable for two crops of wheat annually and for summer crops such as cotton and tobacco (Newbigin 1949:333).

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Since the growing season for these last two crops is a dry one, the cotton always requires irrigation and the tobacco sometimes does. The natural underground drainage system makes it possible to drill good wells almost anywhere in the fields, from which water may be drawn by diesel irrigation pumps. Many such wells have been dug and are serving Vasilika's farmers. Within the village itself there are nine wells in regular use. Only an unusually dry year brings any

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danger of serious water shortage for either ordinary household purposes or for irrigation. The mulberry trees which line the main village street and the occasional trees which appear here and there among the houses flourish because of the good water table and, in spring and summer, provide a pleasing contrast of dark green to the predominantly brown and orange tones of the village's land and houses.

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The people of Vasilika, like those on the other plains of Greece, not only have the advantage of larger tracts of more fertile soil but also are considerably less isolated than the inhabitants of the mountain villages. As will be seen,

church of St. Cosmas and St. Damian, therefore, Vasilika's public buildings and its two commercial establishments are concentrated toward the end of the village that is closest to the turnoff from the highway.

The part of the village street which is between the two coffeehouses is called the *aghora* (market place), and it is here that the public life of the village is carried on. The bus stops at the *aghora*. Most of the itinerant peddlers stand there and loudly shout their wares. Government officials sit in one or the other of the coffeehouses to conduct business with the villagers. At the end of a day's work in the fields and throughout much of every day in the winter, Vasilika's men sit in the coffeehouses to talk, occasionally to play cards, and, incidentally, to drink coffee or, in the summer, soft drinks. On feast days and holidays musicians come to the *aghora*, and the villagers, their guests, and people from the neighboring settlements gather to listen to the music, and to take turns at dancing and at watching the dancers. For the most part, however, the world of the *aghora*, and, indeed, the public world of the village, is a male world penetrated sporadically by children of both sexes. Business with government officials or with artisans is conducted by the men. Men do the marketing from the peddlers of fresh foods, and buy whatever items are needed from the village stores. Little girls up to the age of twelve or fourteen, alone or with their brothers, may be sent to the *aghora* on errands, but older girls and women will venture into the area only to pass through it on their way to church or to the fields. I have seen a young mother from the eastern end of the village, when she heard the calls of a tomato vendor, walk to the edge of the *aghora* area. She stood some two hundred feet from the tomato wagon, shouted to the peddler to ask what his prices were, and then waited in the same spot until she could send a passing child to buy her tomatoes for her.

The private world of the villagers, which is more significant than the public one both from their own point of view and from that of the outside observer of the culture and social structure of the region, is concentrated in and around the homes. With a few exceptions to be noted later, each of Vasilika's married men owns the house in which he lives with his wife and children. The structural type and size of the houses and the arrangement of each family's compound of buildings varies partly with the age of the buildings and partly with the income level of the owners. The large older houses are two-story rectangular stone buildings with an outside staircase leading to the terrace of the second story. There is no way of reaching the upper rooms from the inside of the house. The terrace, with wooden plank flooring if there has been no recent renovation, and of cement, if there has been, is a constant feature of the two-story houses. The roofs are peaked and covered with red tiles. Stones are used to keep loose tiles in place. Large two-story houses built since the end of World War II are constructed on the same pattern, but with flat terrazzo roofs. Most of these are still constructed of the local stone. A second type of older house is smaller in area, has only one floor, and is built either of the prevailing stone or of whitewashed stucco covering a brick frame. Some of these structures have no windows, and when this is the case, they are more frequently than not used as combined storage houses and barns. However, several of Vasilika's families live in such

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Vasilika

steel plow, or he can hire a tractor to do the job. The hiring of the tractor includes fuel and the services of a tractor operator.

Two farmers in Vasilika own tractors—one made the purchase in 1952 (a British Ferguson), the other in 1956 (a British Fordson). They were bought on the installment plan with credit extended by the Agricultural Bank of Greece. The tractor operators are a son and a nephew, respectively, of each of the owners. Both of the farmers who purchased tractors have landholdings which are large for the region, perhaps as many as sixty *stremata* but divided into tracts of some ten to twenty *stremata* each. Even if the land were not divided into such small parcels, there would not be enough return on so little land for economically sound use of a tractor. Both the bank management and the farmers are well aware of this, so that credit for the purchase of the machinery is given with the understanding that the owner will use the tractor as a capital investment and earn income from it by renting it out.

Farmers decide to hire or not to hire a tractor for the fall plowing on the basis of practical considerations of the moment. If weather conditions have been normal in the late summer and early fall, a farmer will be more likely to proceed with his horse-drawn plowing. If, however, early rains have delayed the cotton picking and all hands are needed in the cotton fields when the wheat fields should be plowed, a farmer may hire a tractor to be sure that the job gets done before the winter rains. Most of the farmers maintain a horse to use as a pack animal, in any case, so that it is obviously cheaper to plow with the horse. For increased efficiency, two farmers sometimes contribute one horse apiece, so that the team of horses working on each of their fields in turn will get the work done faster and at no additional cost. For wheat, the farmers say, the deeper plowing of the tractor is not important, so whenever possible they work with the animals. For cotton, as we shall see later, they believe tractor plowing increases the yield. Generally speaking, as one might expect, the farmers with fewer land resources tend to make less use of the tractors than those who can expect a good cash income from their fields and so can afford the outlay for the hire of a tractor.

After the broadcast sowing of the wheat (which is done on each *strema* immediately after it has been plowed) and the dragging of the fields, what remains is some light hoeing to be done in February and March, the spreading by hand of some chemical fertilizer at about the same time, and when the weather warms up, the spraying of a chemical weed killer by means of a hand-operated pressure pump. A farmer who does not own such a pump borrows one from a neighbor, and no charge is made for its use.

Harvesting of the wheat crop is done almost entirely by machine in Vasilika. Reaper and thresher combines, with their operators, make the rounds of the Boeotian plains villages at harvest time in June. The threshed wheat is weighed out in the fields and the machine operators are paid promptly with twelve percent of the crop. Chaff and straw left in the fields are collected by the household and made into small packages to be used for bedding down the animals. Each farmer may set aside four or five *stremata* of his wheat field to be reaped by hand with a standard sickle. He then hires a thresher with operator

2: Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) 66 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

231 With few exceptions, dogs, like the other animals, are not considered [552] pets. They are not given names and are referred to simply as "our dog." Parents [865] permit young children to play roughly with them and to tease and abuse them as they wish. The animal is fed scraps of bread once a day, and there is a feeling that there may be some advantage to keeping it slightly hungry. The dogs also act as scavengers whenever horses or other large animals die in the vicinity of [178] the village. Further evidence for the completely utilitarian attitude of the [373] villagers toward their dogs is the diminution of the number of these animals in the village since the introduction in 1960 of electric lights on the street and paths of Vasilika.

Variations in Wealth

• 423 This chapter has dealt with the most important methods of providing 511 subsistence and income in Vasilika from the standpoint of the typical small 592 farm owner. However, all the farming households of Vasilika do not have land or other resources of equal value. Among the thirty-five land-owning households of Vasilika there are perhaps eight whose total holdings range from one to [422] fifteen *stremata* and who own only a few sheep and goats. These households usually own donkeys, however, and occasionally, a mule and some chickens. Along with the four farm households in Vasilika who own no land whatever, [464] these eight are the groups who must find wage labor in the village or in the neighboring communities. The level of living of both these groups is close to what is needed for bare subsistence, and a bad agricultural season leaves them close to destitution.

Another eight households are those of farmers whose land-holdings range from about fifteen to thirty *stremata* and who maintain themselves at what is considered an acceptable standard in the village, but who do so by a narrow margin. In several instances, these are households with children too young either to help in the farm work or to supplement income by wage labor.

Slightly more than half of the total number of farm-owning families—some nineteen—might be considered substantial farmers who may have better or worse years but whose present situation is reasonably secure. The largest land owner in the village has about 150 *stremata*, several men have something like 100, and the rest have holdings of 40 or 50 *stremata*. Forty *stremata* are regarded by common consent as a minimum for a decent standard of living for [422] a farm household of four. Among these farmers, some own enough sheep to get additional income from selling surplus animals, but most have just enough sheep to supply milk, cheese, and meat for household needs. These farmers also have one or two horses.

434 A gross difference in the quantity of property owned is not the only fac- 511 tor effecting the income variation among the households of Vasilika. Soil fertility and drainage conditions are not the same on all the village lands, so some farmers get greater yields from smaller plots of well-situated fields. In addition,

2: Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) 43 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

4

The Family: Dowry and Inheritance; Formal Structure[1]

182 428 583 THE DOWRY AND INHERITANCE SYSTEM in Vasilika is primarily a mechanism by which property is transferred from one generation to the next. It is this kind of mechanism, but it is also more. By reason of the context of values in which they operate and because of their specific characteristics, dowry and inheritance patterns as they function in Vasilika have ramifications not only for the Boeotian countryside but also for Greece as a whole.

Inheritance by Sons

428 583 Both the Greek laws of inheritance and village custom require that property be divided equally among all the children, sons and daughters alike. [671] [594] Some receive their shares through inheritance or by gifts while the parents are still alive, but the daughters of a family are entitled to their share at marriage in the form of a dowry. Since, from the standpoint of the villagers, a man's most compelling obligation is to arrange for the successful marriage of his daughters, and since no girl in Vasilika can normally expect to marry without at least a token dowry, the girls have first lien on the family's property. For most of [423] Vasilika's families, land holdings are the most valuable assets, and dowries are, therefore, calculated ordinarily as a transfer of a share of the land from parents to a daughter and through her to the jurisdiction of her husband. However, if a family's land holdings are such that it is obvious that by giving daughters their

[1] Portions of this chapter were presented as a paper at a conference on Rural Peoples of the Mediterranean held at Burg Wartenstein in July 1959, and will appear in *Mediterranean Countrymen*, edited by Julian Pitt-Rivers, Mouton and Co., The Hague, scheduled for publication in 1962.

2:Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) 963 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

share of the land at the time of their marriage, the shares remaining for the sons will be too small to enable them to support their future wives and children, the family recognizes the problem and tries to make some adjustment that will prevent the threatened poverty. The villagers are well aware of the dangers of land fragmentation under a system of equal inheritance. The average land holding in Vasilika is already only one-third to one-fourth of what it was at the time the village was settled. Thanks to the introduction of irrigation and improvements in agricultural techniques (see Chapters 2 and 3), both the bulk of yields and the cash value of the crops in the area have increased to the point at which the farmers maintain a higher standard of living on the smaller holdings than their grandfathers did on the more extensive ones. But the process has its limits, and the future possibility of economically useless small holdings is a real hazard for Vasilika's families.

One kind of solution to its problem is for a family to try to train or educate its "surplus" sons for a nonfarming occupation; if possible, one that will send them to the towns and cities as white-collar workers or as professional men. This effort, however, is more than merely a solution to a recognized problem. Status as an urbanite has very high value for the villagers in its own right. As the previous chapter has shown, the families of Vasilika try to import urban ways into the village; their efforts to send their own sons and daughters directly into the towns and cities may now be discussed. For quite apart from the necessities of their situation, the people of Vasilika act as if they assumed that life in towns and cities is superior to life in a small village. This judgment is not based on a belief that there is necessarily greater economic well-being in the towns. On the contrary, the villagers believe it is more difficult to achieve a respectable standard in the larger centers and, indeed, that the plight of the poor is worse in the town than in the village. They say it is harder to have little when one is tempted by so much. But the villagers respect an educated man; education enables a person to pursue occupations which the villagers believe have greater prestige than farming, and the preponderance of these occupations are practiced in towns. Not only white-collar workers but also journalists, lawyers, doctors, writers, gymnasium and university professors congregate in the provincial towns and in Athens (cf. Antonakaki 1955:93). Even if a young man from Vasilika is not fortunate enough to work in one of these favored occupations—even if he is a tailor or a barber or an artisan of another type, or a small merchant—he is believed to acquire some aura of prestige simply by living in the more populous center.

The young girls of Vasilika want to marry into the towns because they are well aware of the greater physical ease and comfort available there and contrast these conditions favorably with the arduous and endless labor they are accustomed to in the village.

Still another incentive for gaining the status of a town dweller is the belief, in Vasilika, that life in town is more full of adventure and less monotonous than life in the village. Besides, the towns and Athens have crowds, and *polis cosmos* (many people) are enjoyed by the villagers for their own sake. A *paniyiri* or Easter is considered successful in proportion to the number of people

2: Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) 463 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

584 from the village or from the community of the prospective spouse, rather than a professional. On the groom's side, the father participates in the negotiations, but the prospective groom himself is present and active in the proceedings. His decision as to the minimum value of the dowry and the form in which he will accept it is the crucial one.

The dowry negotiations and the final marriage contract can be usefully discussed, therefore, as analogous to a commercial transaction in which each side tries to get the most value at the least cost. For the bride's father, the material 583 costs include the land and cash he must give as part of his daughter's dowry. 428 She is, of course, legally and customarily entitled to her share of the patrimony, 423 but except for the cash, the determination of just how much is her share is not easy to arrive at. A farmer, as we have seen, holds land in scattered parcels of different quality; some of the parcels are in the immediate vicinity of Vasilika, no more than an hour's walk away from the village; others may have been part of his wife's dowry and may, therefore, be near her village; his house has value, but since his daughter will not live with him, he cannot give her part of it. The problem is solved in Vasilika by making a rough estimate of the money value of the parents' property in terms of gold sovereigns (*lires*) and then determining how many *lires* a girl is entitled to. Since the end of the Greek Civil War in [436] 1949, the drachma has been stabilized, and the villagers as well as the rest of [454] the Greek population are gaining confidence in the currency. However, the belief that gold sovereigns, worth approximately $10 each in 1961, are the only trustworthy form of cash is still common in Greece, as is the hoarding of the sovereigns and the requirement that bills be paid in them. The villagers evaluate [435] property in terms of *lires* and always speak of a dowry as one of so many *lires*, regardless of whether the property transferred is cash or land or both.

593 Besides the property costs of the dowry, a farmer loses the labor of his daughter both on the farm and in the household. Finally, there is an emotional 152 cost to the parents, particularly to the mother, at the marriage of a daughter. A mother loses the companionship of a friend, a confidante, and a working partner in the house and the fields. Among the more prosperous farmers, girls marry in [582] their middle or late twenties. As a result mothers frequently have had many years of cooperation with grown daughters. The wrench at parting is seriously felt. Mothers in Vasilika openly lament the loss of their daughters and speak frequently of how much they miss their absent girls.

581 When a marriage is contemplated between families of equal wealth and social position, for example, when the daughter of a farmer is being married to 584 a man who expects to stay on his father's farm, and when his share of the farm has approximately the same value as what the girl brings in as a dowry, the negotiations are relatively straightforward. Each side can then limit itself to checking on the claims the other is making and to surveying the total situation. Is the yield of the land the girl is bringing what her father says it is? Will the son-in-law be entitled to the share of the land he claims he will have? Does the [593] boy have so many sisters that his father may die before they have been married off leaving the boy with the responsibility of dowering them? Is the father-in-law's house well enough equipped so that the girl will be able to live at approxi-

2:Friedl E-5 (1955-1959)/963 EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

lives in his wife's village and has married a girl from his own settlement and, therefore, has land near the groom's village. A farmer husband may even be willing to consider the sale of the land in his wife's village to make a good purchase nearer home. Neither of these possibilities may come to fruition for years, so that they may remain subjects for long-term discussion between a man and his father- and brothers-in-law. To summarize the situation, land given as one part of the dowry and village exogamy have the consequence of stimulating land exchanges and sales in the Boeotian countryside, of stimulating the visits of men among the villages in the region with a consequent exchange of views and ideas, and of providing an economic focus for maintaining some kind of relationships between affinal relatives, that is relatives by marriage. The system of transferring land as dowry has the effect also of permitting a man to utilize his wife's property throughout his married life instead of having to wait to do so until after his wife's father's death.

The actions of the villagers and the tone in which they discuss these questions suggest that although there is some sentiment attached to the land inherited from a father and to the land that were parts of a mother's dowry, the symbolic value of particular parcels of land as a link between generations does not usually take precedence over the economic value of the land as an income and food producer.

We have still to consider the question of the ultimate disposition of dower properties in marriages between farmers. The Greek Civil Code states that dower property must be accounted for separately from that owned or eventually inherited by the husband, and as we have seen, stipulates that the consent of the wife is required before dower property can be sold or exchanged. If there is a divorce, the wife is entitled to the return of the dower property or of its equivalent. In the house of the groom's father, the newly married couple is given a room in which they and, later, their children sleep. Here the bride's trousseau gives the room a personal touch. Both the young people work on the farm holdings of the groom's father along with his father, mother, and brothers, and unmarried sisters. They also work on the young wife's dower lands. The income from these may be pooled with that from the paternal holdings but need not be. The young husband's father has jurisdiction over the ordinary living expenses of the entire household and distributes the cash needed for purchases of clothing, food, and household equipment. During the lifetime of his father, the cash portion of the dowry may be invested by the son in additional land or in some other capital equipment such as a diesel pump. Under no circumstances do the villagers consider it proper to sell dower lands or to use dower funds for ordinary living expenses. Only the need for money for a very serious illness or for some other emergency is felt to justify such action. In whatever form, the dowry is considered capital which may be invested or saved to add to the estate available for the newly married couple's children.

After the death of the husband's father, the young man continues to live with his brothers, most of whom are likely to be married by now, until they decide to separate and divide the patrimony. This now consists of the property their father inherited from his father's patrimony, the dower property of their

2: Friedl E-5 (1955-1959) EH1 Greece EH1
Vasilika

653 The reluctance of the villagers to work on the road seems to result not
461 from a lack of motivation but rather from a more compelling distaste for manual
491 labor, and especially for such work when it does not directly or immediately benefit each man's own family. Several years later when a new school was built, some of the parents of the school children helped with parts of the construction. The other villagers did not.

651 The preparation of the community tax rolls is an important responsibility
623 of the village council. Since taxes are based on land tenure, on produce, and on livestock ownership, the council must prepare lists of people who own land within the boundaries of the *kinotis.* The lists include for each person information on the number of *stremata* in each parcel of land he owns, on the kind of crop raised on each parcel, and on the quality of the land. Lists of the number of horses, mules, sheep, and goats owned by each villager are also compiled. Donkeys and chickens are not taxed and no listing is made of them. The tax is calculated for each item and the completed tax rolls are posted. A villager may feel that he has been unfairly treated, that, for example, the quality of his vine-
[627] yard has been overestimated or that he has fewer sheep than the number listed. In such a case he can request a revision from the council. His request is usually granted and that settles the matter. If he is not satisfied, he may ask for a hearing before a grievance committee, the members of which are proposed by the council from among the villagers. Any decision of the committee is subject to
[634] the veto of the nomarch. In Vasilika disputes over tax rolls are said not to occur,
651 and no grievance committee has been established for many years. There had
628 been a dispute with Parori in the 1930's over the boundaries of the two com-
692 munities. Since each *kinotis* receives taxes from the land within its boundaries the question of where one *kinotis* begins and the other ends is of considerable importance. The argument between the two villages was finally settled in the courts.

641 In connection with the preparation of tax rolls, the president has some
651 power over the shepherds living in the community. Anyone classified as a non-
621 resident of Vasilika must pay double the rate for pasturing his animals there. If
233 no permission has been granted, he must pay triple the rate for residents. The question of when and if the new settlers in Vasilika—the shepherds, who had
[622] been living there since 1950—would be considered residents of Vasilika, that is, full-fledged citizens of the *kinotis,* was of significance both to the village and to the shepherds. They were finally granted this privilege in 1959.

● 423 The actual process of preparing the tax rolls consists of a series of agree-
651 ments among the villagers, including their council members, as to what amount
[623] of property they will declare. In consequence, the tax rolls do not necessarily represent an accurate and complete accounting of property ownership in the
[583] *kinotis.* Farmers often try to hide some of their holdings and keep some of their transactions quiet. For example, in order to pay less in taxes on the value of dowries, the records may show the transfer of a smaller parcel of land to the groom than the one privately agreed on and later privately carried out. Records
[652] are probably being kept more accurately now, since credit from the Agricultural Bank is based on land holdings, and proof of ownership must be given to the bank.

5:Hammond M-5 (1948-1950)1956
EH1 Greece EH1

793 [463] peasant farmer who cultivates his land like all his parishioners, and who exercises a ministry which is almost wholly liturgical in character. His ecclesiastical duties are limited in practice to administering the mysteries of baptism and the holy chrism; to marrying and burying, and offering week by week the unbloody sacrifice; to singing the divine office; to memorial services, blessings of homes and crops and sundry other objects, and to an occasional exorcism.

793 465 [874] [589] The parish priest *must* be married and at least thirty years of age, and the most that he can hope for in the way of preferment is a slight increase in his basic stipend if he is able to spend a year or two at one of the seminaries (*phrontisteria*) for parish clergy. This basic wage—which is supplemented by fees and offerings in kind, as well as by the fruit of the country parson's agricultural and other labours—is miserable enough. It was only in 1949 raised to 250,000 drachmas (the equivalent of less than six pounds sterling) a month: a pair of boots then cost about 70,000 drachmas and a pig perhaps 300,000. In such circumstances the support of a large family leaves little margin for luxuries, even when harvests are good and life runs smoothly and securely. Unsatisfactory as the economic position of the village *papas* remains, it is considerably better than it was fifty years ago. Until 1909 the parish priest was entirely dependent upon the fees of his parishioners and the labour of his own hands. The provision of a regular stipend—inadequate as this may seem—was only made possible by the creation of a General Ecclesiastical Fund deriving its income from confiscated monastic property and lands; and while the anti-monastic legislation of recent years has aroused considerable resentment among the monks themselves, there can be little doubt that the redistribution of wealth which it has involved has been of incalculable benefit to the Church as a whole.

[659] [792] [423]

793 [795] Even in the towns the scope of the activities of the married clergy is strictly limited. There are a few married priests in Athens engaged in work of a type generally reserved for the monastic clergy; one of them, who presides over the press and information office of the *Apostoliki Diakonia* (the Home Mission of the Church of Greece) and has a son and a daughter who are both students of the theological faculty of the university, bears the title of *protopresbyter*—though this is rare in Greece.

[589] There are certain indications that the number of educated married clergy may before very long increase considerably; this has already happened among the Russians of the diaspora and elsewhere in the Orthodox world. It is, of course, from the celibate clergy that the bishops

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
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[Village Life]

perhaps, not be counted as full-time farmers. Indeed, when one realizes that according to this same census the average family farm contained only a little more than 8 acres, and the amount of productive land per head of the rural population totaled just 1.75 acres, it is obvious that there are very few full-time farmers in Greece, if the term is taken to mean persons who busy themselves on the land throughout the year.

Except for a few weeks, when especially intensive work of cultivation or harvesting must be done, Greek peasant farmers enjoy a great deal of leisure, and spend it, characteristically, sitting in the village *cafeneion*, or coffee house, talking, playing backgammon, or just watching the passing scene. A casual observer might mistake such idleness for laziness; yet when tangible gain is to be won by working hard, Greek peasants do not spare themselves. But in practically every village there are far more hands than are needed to do the work of the fields; and when the needful work has been done, sitting in a coffee house is more entertaining than sitting at home. There a man may hear the latest gossip of the village, read the Athens newspapers, talk politics, and watch the shadows shift across the village square as the day progresses.

The women, on the other hand, lead a much harder life. Household tasks and the care of children take up most of the hours of the day, and in the seasons when field work is heavy, women work side by side with the men. For a woman to sit in a coffee house would be the grossest breach of etiquette, something quite unthinkable. The village water fountain may serve as a place for daily gossip; but it is the church which really provides the village women with a meeting place where they may on a Sunday morning, after (or even during) the service, talk and enjoy a few minutes of leisure each week. By a curious and unspoken law, the men of the villages usually do not attend church, save on feast days and other special occasions. Thus

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
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[Town Life]

Greece, far more so than in the United States, so that a cousin or uncle who has set himself up in town will expect to help his relatives to find a footing in town when they attempt to make the escape from the land, and will also expect to be received back into the family if dire necessity should ever compel him to abandon his town career. Family ties of this sort provide a bond between town and country, extending to the second or even the third generation.

The psychological relationship between town and country is, however, subtle and complex. A peasant regards a man who has no land as something less than a full man; at the same time, most peasants envy what they feel to be the easier, richer and more stimulating life led by townsfolk, and especially by Athenians. Town dwellers, characteristically, regard themselves as far more intelligent, better informed and more civilized than the peasants. Yet elements of peasant outlook still survive among them, particularly the burning desire to own a house and a bit of land on which to plant a grape arbor and raise flowers or a few vegetables.

In town a man's most important relations are with outsiders, while in the village, relations within the family and a circle of relatives dominate daily life. In town, people must buy and sell every day, and the market relationship is shot through with antagonism, since it appears that in any immediate situation one party's gain is the other's loss. Prolonged bargaining – typical of any purchase, even of vegetables in the street – expresses this attitude; and the chicanery and high markups generally characteristic of Greek business are a consequence of the same spirit which sees in any outsider a legitimate victim, to be fleeced if possible. In village life, where market relations are merely occasional, mutual help and cooperation within the family circle provide the matrix of daily living. To be sure, outside the family circle, Greek peasants can be just as ruthless as

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1

ican aid programs on Greek society is to examine what has been accomplished in a few typical villages, for only after the agrarian problems of the nation have been somewhat relieved can there be much expectation of enriching or improving urban conditions.

Two general dividing lines separate the villages of Greece. By far the most important is the contrast, explained in Chapter 1, between hill and plain, that is, between food-deficit and food-surplus rural communities. A second general distinction is between those villages that underwent radical redistribution of land after World War I, and those where patterns of landownership have evolved piecemeal and privately without any massive governmental intervention. Generally, villages of the first type lie in the plains of the north, while all hill villages, and plains villages south of Thessaly, fall into the second category. In view of these important differences, it is necessary to study at least one village from each of these groupings.

Another point of distinction is the degree to which traditional patterns of village life underwent change during the past ten years. Some villages, whether by accident or thanks to intelligent and energetic leadership within the village, were able to undertake quite radical changes and profited very greatly from new techniques of agriculture. Others stayed generally within traditional frames. Still others were able to make only halfway satisfactory changes in old customs and techniques. It seems wise to try to illustrate different degrees of adjustment and improvement, first among plains villages, then among hill villages; and in each case to begin with an example of slight change and conclude with an example of maximally successful adjustment.

Before turning to an account of what particular villages have done, however, it might be well to say something about village leadership, and the relations between villagers and officials of the national government. Until 1951, the villages (and larger

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
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crowd around for advice, loans, seed and the like, and begin to turn to their local village government for assistance in bringing further improvements to the community.

Let us now turn to specific cases, and see what has happened in six representative villages during the past ten years.

Villages of the Plains

LOFISCOS

Lofiscos is situated in the plain of Thessaly, about half a mile off the main trunk road between Larissa and Volos. This is a region of hot summers and cold winters, for Thessaly is landlocked, surrounded west, east and south by precipitous mountains, and exposed to cold northern winds coming down from the plateau of western Macedonia in winter. It is the best wheat land of Greece, and wheat is the major – indeed almost the sole – crop raised by the villagers of Lofiscos today.

As the visitor approaches the village over a wandering track, deeply rutted by trucks that traverse the soft earth during the muddy months of winter and spring, Lofiscos looks shabby and ill-kempt. Houses are scattered irregularly; little fresh paint is in evidence. The dominant structure near the center of the village is a half-ruined rectangular stone tower that looks like and in fact once was a small fortress.

Before 1881, the year in which Thessaly was annexed to Greece, this building was inhabited by a Turkish pasha, who owned the entire area which now belongs to the villagers of Lofiscos. The ground floor was his granary and stable; in the upper story the great man lived with his harem. Since 1881 the building has been abandoned and allowed to decay slowly. The scattered huts in which the villagers live also survive from Turkish times in almost every case. The inhabitants are the

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Lofiscos

[Villages of the Plains]

The inhabitants are the
423 sons or grandsons of men who once tilled the Turk's lands for
427 him on a sharecropping basis. They stayed behind when the
[621] Turk departed, and in due course fell heir to his land.

These changes did not happen all at once. When the Turkish landowner left he sold his rights to a wealthy Greek who lived in Larissa. The new landlord continued the old arrangements, with the difference that he was an absentee. Early in the twentieth century, however, widespread peasant unrest manifested itself in Thessaly, and in 1912 a law of expropriation was passed
[425] against the large landowners. But it was not until 1920 that the effect of this law was felt in Lofiscos. In that year government surveyors and officials carried out a general distribution of the estate. Every male resident of the village nineteen years old or over was given possession of 137 stremmata of land (34¼ acres). In addition, 15 stremmata (3¾ acres) were assigned to each male member of a community of semi-migratory shepherds who had immemorially used these lands for winter pasture, paying a fee to the owner for the privilege of grazing their sheep on the stubble left after the grain harvest. A thousand stremmata (250 acres) remained in the possession of the absentee land-
[621] owner. The rest of the land was left as common pasture. Much of it was unsuited to cultivation because of flooding in the spring; and in any case 137 stremmata was about all the land a single family could easily cultivate with the tools then available to them.

The land settlement of 1920 remained essentially unchanged thereafter. Many of the men who received their farms at that time are still alive; five families had moved into the village by 1956, but no one had moved away. The five newcomers owned no land at all, but worked for the established farmers of the village or, more often, on the big estate of the absentee owner. (Incidentally, this estate survived in 1956 as a working unit in spite of the land law of 1952 which forbade ownership of more

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Lofiscos

[Villages of the Plains]

than 400 stremmata of cultivated land. Presumably the owner had divided legal title among relatives or friends without surrendering real control of his land.)

The village is very small. In 1956 its population was only 130,[1] yet it occupies no less than 6,000 acres, excluding the absentee landowner's estate, which is counted as part of the lands of Lofiscos by official government reckoning. This amounts to more than 46 acres per capita; and even though more than half of the land remains rough pasture, subject to flooding for part of every year, such an abundance of land represents solid wealth by Greek peasant standards. And indeed, the village is wealthy. Farmers find little difficulty in accumulating gold sovereigns with which to dower their daughters, for wheat is always in demand and a government purchase scheme keeps the price stable and well above world market levels. In spite of the shabby appearance of their houses and the untidy appearance of their clothes, the families of Lofiscos are, by their own standards, very well off. Almost all of them probably have several hundred gold sovereigns hidden away, but this no stranger could ever expect to know.

The tribulations of the second world war, of the occupation and of the guerrilla war made almost no impression on Lofiscos. The young men served in the army, of course, and saw something of the outer world. But on their return they seemed to fit back smoothly into the familiar routine. As the guerrillas never

1. This and all subsequent figures for village populations are rough approximations. Village records do not include any sort of census figure. They are confined to registration of births, marriages and deaths, and the most important function they serve is to provide the basis for the annual call-up of military recruits. Moreover, a family often remains registered in a village long after it has moved away; in such instances births and deaths are likely to be omitted from the village books, and may or may not be recorded elsewhere. One must therefore depend upon informal estimates of village officials. This leaves a considerable margin for error, unless the officials consulted are unusually careful.

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Nea Eleftherohori

[Villages of the Plains]

423 425 The land now occupied by the villagers of Nea Eleftherohori was owned by a Turkish landlord until 1912, and worked by a group of Turkish peasants. These were harried from the land when the Greek army came north in the first Balkan war of 1912. Thereupon, some of the inhabitants of Eleftherohori, together with a large group from another similar hill village, called Katophigi, simply squatted on the vacant land. They apportioned the booty on a first-come, first-served basis, effective title depending on tillage of particular fields. Since there was plenty of land for everyone, this provoked no difficulty.

The situation was radically changed and legally stabilized in 1927 when government authorities surveyed and redistributed [166] village property. The Greek government was then engaged in settling as many as possible of the refugees who had come from Asia Minor in 1922 and 1923 on land vacated by Turks; but it was not deemed politic to drive the squatters entirely away from what they had seized. Consequently, an estimate of the fertility of the soil was made in order to determine the smallest allotment on which a single family could subsist. In Nea Eleftherohori, the allotment was fixed at 27 stremmata, i.e., 6¾ acres. To permit as many refugees as possible to find land, it was further decided that lots would be assigned only to heads of families, not, as had been done earlier in Lofiscos, to every man, married or single.

As far as the squatters, or "old settlers," were concerned, these policies did not usually involve much loss. To be sure, their holdings were reassigned and particular pieces of land changed hands, but possession was so recent that this in itself did not rouse serious resentment. Moreover, few families failed to get as much land as they had previously occupied. When it [178] became known that only heads of families could qualify for an allotment, all the boys of marriageable age, even if only seventeen or eighteen years old, hastened to find themselves wives,

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[Villages of the Plains]

and thus made good a claim for 27 stremmata. The original squatters' rights had been apportioned on the basis of the amount of land actually tilled by a given family, and as a man or a boy could scarcely cultivate more than about 27 stremmata single-handed with the sort of equipment they had, the old families received about as much land as they had had before. The difference was that the sons escaped from parental control earlier than they would otherwise have done, since title to their share of the land was now vested individually, not, as traditionally, in the parental family as a whole.

The squatters of 1912 had not occupied all the cultivable land. When they had all received their lots, therefore, almost an equal number of refugees, mostly from the Caucasus area, were settled on the remainder. The two groups stood more or less apart, especially at the beginning. Many of the customs of the Caucasus people seemed wild and barbarous to the old settlers. But because the old settlers felt little or no sense of grievance, and because each family was very nearly on a level of economic equality, with 27 stremmata apiece, the fissure between the two groups was not great. Nevertheless, the houses of the old settlers are still separated by about one hundred yards from those occupied by the refugees, so that the village is physically divided into two quite distinct parts.

In 1932 a supplementary land distribution took place, giving families with more than four members an additional 5 stremmata; in 1937 a further adjustment was made when forty-three families removed to a newly drained area in the valley of the Aliakmon River, and left their allotments behind, to be reassigned in chunks of 5 stremmata to the larger families of Nea Eleftherohori. No further official changes have since been made, but the natural processes of death and inheritance have resulted in the splitting up of a few of the allotments into smaller farms, while in some cases formerly separate allotments have been

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423 425 combined into one holding. The great majority of the families of the village, however, still occupied 27 or 32 stremmata in 1956, and most of the original holders of the allotments were still alive.

178 621 241 433 The land settlement in Nea Eleftherohori differed from that in Lofiscos in two respects. First, the farms in Nea Eleftherohori were less than one fifth as large as in Lofiscos. Second, the new settlers, uprooted from their former homes, whether up the mountain or in distant Asia Minor, left binding customary ways of life behind them, and started off in Nea Eleftherohori without the automatic conservatism and suspicion of innovation typical until very recently of the families of Lofiscos. These differences acted together to make the farmers of Nea Eleftherohori a good deal more willing to try new crops and methods, even before the war, than those in the older Thessalian community. Life on so little land was difficult at best, and anything that promised to bring in a little more seemed worth trying; and when the problems of farming the land were new in any event, there was far less psychological resistance against trying some further innovation.

621 163 433 Another contrast with Lofiscos, a contrast perhaps related to the general shake-up of old customary routines which came to the inhabitants of Nea Eleftherohori between 1912 and 1923, is that the new settlers proceeded to procreate children at a far greater rate than occurs in Lofiscos, where families are mostly quite small. [2]

2. It would be very interesting to know why the prosperous peasants of Lofiscos have fewer children than their much poorer fellows in Nea Eleftherohori, but I do not know Lofiscos well enough to hazard an opinion. Can it be that the general market orientation of their agriculture and the habit of calculating in monetary terms leads them to restrict the number of their children deliberately, in some fashion or other, realizing that to divide the family farm among many children spells impoverishment for

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The smallness of the original farms and the large size of most families in Nea Eleftherohori began, even in the late 1930's, to present the villagers with a very serious problem. What were their children going to do? To divide the land was a desperate solution, inasmuch as the farms were already near the minimum that a single family could subsist upon. Somehow or other, all but one son had to be freed from the land, find some other form of livelihood, and leave the entire farm to be inherited by one brother. Hopeless poverty if not outright hunger was the certain lot of everyone who stayed on a divided inheritance.[3]

Nea Eleftherohori has been less fortunate than Lofiscos in still another respect. Situated at the foot of Mount Olympus, it lay just on the edge of the territory that guerrilla bands controlled in 1943–45 and again in 1947–49. These were, therefore, years of intense political insecurity in the village, and some loss of life. In 1947 the guerrillas organized a raid upon Nea Elef-

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the new generation? If so, why not in Nea Eleftherohori? To be sure, that village pursued a more nearly subsistence style of agriculture between the wars; but this fact by itself does not seem enough to explain the contrast. Perhaps the prevalence of early marriages in Nea Eleftherohori, consequent upon the mode of land distribution in 1927, accounts for the difference, early marriages naturally bringing larger families; or perhaps some recklessness engendered by the catastrophic upheaval which the Asia Minor refugee population underwent encouraged large families, for there is in Nea Eleftherohori, as in all of Greece, a noticeable differential in birth rate between refugee and "old settler" groups, with the refugees standing higher.

3. In legal form, the Greek government retained title to all the land distributed to refugees and squatters after World War I. Part of the original justification for this policy was that it would permit the government to prevent excessive subdivision of peasant farms; and it was still the case in 1956 that legal tenure of each allotment was lodged in a single family head. This, however, did not prevent some families from dividing the allotments in practice among the heirs. Yet the fact that such divisions could not be legalized may perhaps have reinforced the reluctance of the families of Nea Eleftherohori to make them.

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Paleo Corinthos

[Villages of the Plains]

recent years, this was the one the villagers most praised, perhaps because it was the newest.

Very considerable inequalities in landholding exist within the village. As a result, some families have profited far more than others from the new prosperity. Since the Greek War of Independence (1821–30), if not before, landholdings in Old Corinth have not been disturbed by wholesale government action, of the sort characteristic in the northern part of the country. The processes of inheritance and marriage settlements, supplemented by purchase and sale of land – something almost unheard of in the northern villages – have resulted in the establishment of extremely complicated property relationships. Renting and sharecropping are both common. In addition, many fields are subject to concurrent rights held by several individuals. This situation arises when heirs have refrained from subdividing an inheritance because such division would reduce the fields to absurdly small dimensions. Instead it has long been the custom to cultivate such fields as a unit and to divide the proceeds, according to some agreed proportion, among all those who have a claim thereto. Over the generations, such concurrent rights have sometimes ramified widely; but the complications of remote family and property relationships are something Greek peasant farmers are able to keep very clear in their heads, with or without written documents.

A substantial proportion of the inhabitants of Old Corinth possess no land at all. They make a living by working for others, either for day wages or on a sharecropping basis. With the introduction of tomatoes and other vegetable crops, together with the revival of the currant market, a definite, though seasonal, shortage of labor has appeared. Substantial farmers (that is, men owning 10 to 20 acres of land) complained of not being able to find enough hands to help them cultivate their fields, even though the wages they paid in the currant fields were

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621 break down. The more elaborate social stratification and intri-
578 cate economic integration which the development from simple
565 village into small town involves carries with it a special vulner-
ability: vulnerability to fluctuations in distant markets, and vul-
nerability to social stresses within the community itself. This is
perhaps the price Old Corinth has to pay for its remarkable eco-
nomic progress in recent years.

x 178 This progress may remind us that there is another sense in
621 which the social structure of Old Corinth shows itself far more
556 flexible and hospitable to innovation than the other villages de-
scribed. For while family and marriage customs have not under-
gone important modification, the occupational patterns of the
community have shown important changes; and in at least one
instance a landless and once very poor man has risen to a posi-
tion of wealth and importance by becoming a successful mer-
chant. Old Corinth has given far more scope to individual and
cooperative enterprise than either Lofiscos or Nea Eleftherohori.
Yet this development, too, is in line with old Greek tradition.
The self-made man, particularly the self-made merchant or
storekeeper, rising to wealth and respectability by virtue of his
mother wit and shrewdness in buying and selling, has been a
prominent figure in Greek society for at least two centuries; and
it has always been the marginal man in the village social hier-
archy – the man who has had no land to keep him busy – who
has naturally gravitated to such occupations when opportunity
has opened. Innovation in Old Corinth has thus taken tradi-
tional forms.

x 178 Since 1912, rural Greece has been fundamentally divided be-
184 tween villages like Old Corinth, which can look back to genera-
● 423 tions of substantially undisturbed evolution, and those villages
621 where within recent memory radical governmental intervention
entirely transformed earlier landholding patterns. The division
is geographical. In Old Greece, meaning Greece within the

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[Villages of the Plains]

boundaries that existed before 1881, village life has not suffered drastic upheaval since 1821, if then. Changes have come slowly and by evolution. The case is far otherwise in New Greece – Thessaly, Macedonia, Epirus and Thrace. There the violent elimination of Turkish landlords and peasants through war was followed by governmental creation of egalitarian peasant communities. This amounted to an agrarian revolution from above, in some cases fully satisfying the peasants – as in Lofiscos – but often failing to do so, as in Nea Eleftherohori.

The slower evolution of village life in Old Greece has meant, at least until the present, the preservation of a fairly firm cake of custom, governing the daily lives of the inhabitants. In this respect, Old Corinth is quite typical. Consequently, in spite of the contrast between rich peasant and landless laborer, the social stratification within these peasant communities has not bred so many revolutionists as have been bred by the hardships of life in an equality of poverty, characteristic of many villages in the north. Conservatism, royalism, traditionalism have all centered in the south; while radicalism, republicanism, restlessness and revolution have found their strongest expression in the north.

Yet while these generalizations are true, I must hasten to add that the villages of the plains never were the main centers of political revolt. Too many had too much to lose in such communities. Rather it was in the hill villages, where life was harder and the prospect of maintaining a given standard of life was dimmer, that revolution found its most congenial ground. Since the latter part of the eighteenth century, if not before, this has been the really vulnerable point in Greek society, the source of major disturbance and of recurrent civil violence. In the hills, even more than in the plains, the future stability or instability of Greek society is likely to be decided in time to come, as it has in times past. Let us therefore leave the plains and turn to the hills.

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Cherasia

[Hill Villages]

led to this change. One was the rise of Volos as an important urban center, requiring charcoal as fuel for cooking and for heating houses. To supply the rising demand, the villagers of Cherasia began cutting off the forests of Mount Pelion with a new energy. A second factor was the growth of population in Cherasia itself. As more families appeared, sheep could not support them all, because the pastures could not be readily extended. So the people fell back on exploitation of the forests.

This "ancient" history is mostly speculation. I was not able to get any clear account of their distant past from the men of the village. What they did know was that in 1905 three families had secured title to 100 stremmata (25 acres) of land apiece in the little valley that spreads out below the site of their winter quarters at the foot of the mountain. At that time, very likely, the free villagers of the mountain saw little or no attraction in the toilsome life of a farmer, and preferred to keep to their ancient shepherd's way of life, supplemented by woodcutting and charcoal burning.

About the time of the first world war, things changed. As the population continued to grow, sheep and charcoal no longer sufficed to provide a satisfactory living for the members of the community. Many of them began to clear little patches of rocky mountainside in the hope of raising a crop or two on the land. Their tenure was legally recognized by a governmental survey made in 1922, which assigned to each family title to the patches its members had cleared and cultivated in preceding years. During the interwar period the pressure to find supplementary means of livelihood through agriculture continued to mount. In 1938, village authorities parceled out 500 stremmata of what had been common pasture to private family ownership. No further property changes had occurred in the village up to 1956.

The brute fact remains, however, that fields cleared from mountain slopes are miserable agricultural land. These produce

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Cherasia

[Hill Villages]

178 a crop of only about 30 okes of wheat per stremma (a little more
433 than 4 bushels per acre), and are capable of doing that only for
241 two or three years, after which time the field has to be aban-
423 doned for a while until its dubious fertility has been restored. The president of the village told me that he allows the villagers to clear land wherever they can find anything that seems worth clearing, even though this goes beyond the letter of the law and encroaches on what is properly common pasture.

178 The desperate effort to find more cultivable land throughout
313 the interwar, wartime and postwar years reflects the growing
314 exhaustion of the forests, upon which the majority of the village
433 population have come to depend. The villagers have cut off the trees farther and farther up the mountain, until only a little scrub oak remains; and even this is so thin that a man has to work hard and long to collect enough wood to make a charcoal
[438] burning. Since World War II, indeed, it has become more usual to sell the wood in its raw form, even though this multiplies transport problems, and means far less money per donkey-load delivered to Volos.

178 Within the village itself bitter feelings began to rise during
241 the interwar period. The three families that had turned to agri-
423 culture in 1905, thus securing possession of the only decent
565 agricultural land in the whole village, were able to keep their
578 farms together. In 1956, one of the three families had removed
427 entirely to Volos, and was renting out its land on a sharecropping basis to poorer families in the village. The other two "rich" families (who by any standard other than that of Cherasia were still poor) were each represented in the village by a single household, presumably because other descendants of the original owners had left for town. The result was a striking economic contrast between the poor woodcutters, whose painfully cleared hillside patches were scarcely worth the labor of cultivation, and the "rich" families. Indeed, the members of the two village

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Cherasia

[Hill Villages]

households owning 100 stremmata each did not find it necessary to work the land themselves. Like the absentee in Volos, they also rented their fields on a sharecropping basis to the others. The president of the village in 1956 was the head of one of these households; he had let the nail of his little finger on one hand grow in order to prove to everyone that he was exempt from manual labor. He was also the only fat man I saw in the village.

The bad feeling in Cherasia was not simply a matter of economics, however. Shepherds have had a proud tradition in Greece. Heavy manual labor is beneath them, and they have always felt themselves superior to the grubbing farmers of the plains. Moreover, a tradition of violence has always lain near the surface among shepherds. In days not so very far past, it was part of the shepherd's job to protect his flock from wolves. Even today a few wolves are said to survive in remote parts of Greece; and whenever public order breaks down, far more dangerous two-footed wolves, armed with guns, quickly appear. The transition from shepherd to bandit has always been easy. A shepherd losing his flock must almost automatically become a two-footed wolf himself, preying on other shepherds or, better yet, on the fat, stolid landlords and peasants of the plain.

In view of these traditions, one can better understand the spirit of Cherasia. Free shepherds, traditionally ready for violence, were being ground down to a status beneath that of the weaklings who in 1905 had preferred the indignity of labor to the leisure of mountain pastures; and to the people of Cherasia this seemed a clear reversal of the proper social order. They were most unwilling to accept such a reversal. They were not farmers, and did not wish to become farmers. As a result, they did not do all they might have done to make their hillside agriculture rewarding. Field labor was, for them, a regrettable necessity, not a satisfying way of life. They made no effort at

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Kardamili

[Hill Villages]

They came back to a village whose earlier means of livelihood was being undermined by new roads. As this fact became clear, emigration from the village commenced. Altogether, something like two hundred persons left the village between 1950 and 1956. Only one family went overseas, to Australia. The rest went either to Kalamata or to Athens. Among those who have remained in the village, a considerable number have undertaken seasonal migration to the Messenian plain in order to seek work with which to supplement the meager income from their olive trees in the village. The biggest single source of employment which has opened up in recent years is work in rice fields, developed in former salt marshes on the very edge of the Messenian plain. For the villagers of Kardamili these fields in Messenia have meant work and wages. Between eighty and ninety persons, both men and women, leave the village each year to help cultivate the rice fields. While working, they live in shanties or even out of doors, and return to their homes in Kardamili when work stops, or when something needs to be done on their own land.

Within the village there are variations in wealth, but no family has so much land as to need to hire labor. Indeed, the village secretary told me that the richest man in the village has only forty days' work a year on his olive trees, while nearly one third of all the village families own no land at all.

The only change that has come to the traditional agriculture of the community is the introduction of fertilizer, but few families use it. A common opinion holds that fertilizer is bad for the olive trees, and makes them short-lived by forcing an unnatural proliferation of fruit. A more sophisticated farmer told me that while the size of the fruit is increased by fertilizer, the quantity of oil is not increased in anything like the same proportion and its quality is lowered. Since the olive trees of this part of Greece are famous for the high quality of the oil they produce, which

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Selection of the Village

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The author's intimate relationship with the farmers of the village and his use of it as a demonstration center for village extension work has led him to select it for this study. Another reason that led the author to select it was of the uniform economy and the uniform social stratification. Due to equal distribution of land there were no class distinctions.

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Available Data Based on Eight Years of Experience.

The discussions and principles discussed in Rural Social Organization, under Dr. Sanderson, are applied as far as they fit the conditions. A careful farm survey was taken with 40 representative farmers out of 120 families. These farmers were representatives due to the fact that only 6 years elapsed since the equal distribution of land. They had the same implements and all of them had nothing except what they got from the government. My close relationship with them and the nature of my work has helped me in my observations. /5/

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The village of Megali Vrisi: Its location, geography and physical characteristics.

The village of Megali Vrisi is only 45 kilometers from the city of Salonica. It lies in the south-central part of Macedonia. Before the refugees moved in, it was occupied by the Turks who at the arrival of the Greeks left for Turkey. Its Turkish name was Armoutchi. Previous to this Turkish name it had a Greek name. The foundations of the mosque that were dug by the refugees in order to get the stones bore in Greek letters the date that it was built and the names of the church committee. In fact many of the names of the surrounding villages were changed quite often at different periods by the respective people that occupied them, either Turks, Bulgarians, Albanians or Greeks.

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makes it easy for the farmers to sell their agricultural products at fairly good prices. The road built during the first war by the Allied armies is still in use and provides good transportation facilities. The same roads may be in use today by the same soldiers. The nearest market is eight kilometers from which most of the goods are bought. Once a week there is a bazaar in this market and on Tuesday of every week another bazaar is held in the nearby village of Herson.

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The old Turkish village was very different than what we find it today. It had an old mosque, a pond in the center of the village, no running water but only wells, small two room sun-dried mud brick houses, with high walls around their yards, so as to protect their women from outside looks. The surrounding area of the village, which was used for cemeteries, was covered with huge pointed blocks of stones. This is because the Turks never buried their dead in the same tomb. They believed that the dead were living in an underground world by themselves and the /8/ heavier and the larger the stone the less chance the dead had to get up. From the number of such stones one could easily tell the number of years the Turks had occupied the village. The new settled refugees have used these stones for the foundations of their new houses and the ground was plowed for cereal raising. This spot being the richest of all the land of the surrounding territory, a very small portion was given to each refugee farmer. Here the fields are 1/8 of an acre. The only cereal that can stand this rich soil without being lodged is barley, which is pastured from December to March and still gives more yield than any other field of the same size. Nothing is lost in the world. Cemeteries are the best sources of nitrogen and phosphorus.

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When the Turks were living in this village they were fewer in proportion to the land and so they could raise more livestock since they had more pasture land. With the increased number of refugees the livestock pasturing was more difficult.

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The young lady at home virtually becomes a slave. She has to prepare warm water and wash the feet of her father and mother-in-law, do the washing, cooking, sewing, cleaning and work at the loom to prepare cloth for the family. The son has no right to object to the demands of his parents, for the services they expect /17/ from his wife. This custom throughout many centuries has become a part of their philosophy of life and naturally is a part of the good qualities of women.

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The work of the women is not seasonal as the men's is. The rush of the summer season decreases in the winter months but the women have to weave, knit, sew, cook, wash the family's clothes and attend the chores. The men during the winter months come together in coffee houses and spend their day in sipping coffee, reading the newspaper and discussing politics.

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Work of Husbands.

Unlike many agricultural counties where the work of the husband is more or less distributed more evenly throughout the year, here we have one crop farming that occupies the men for a few months and the rest of the year is spent in the coffee house, which serve as centers of discussion and relaxation. The effect of the coffee houses is great on the individuals.

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On bazaar days the husband goes to the market where he spends his time either buying articles of food for his family or to meet his friends and study the market prices of certain commodities.

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The long day. During sowing season and harvesting season, which lasts four months of the year, the family /18/ spends long daily hours in the fields. The long hours of work during the rush season obliges the farmer to take his whole family to the fields and enough food to spend the week there. Due to the systems of dividing the land, a farmer besides having six patches scattered on all sides of the village, has to walk 6 miles from the village to get to his fields. Thus the distance and the rush of the work obliges the farmer to sleep in the fields. The usual diet on such long days of hard work is white cheese, black bread, yugourt,

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Sickle	2	40	
Axes	1	70	
Wagons	1	2,500	
			4,200
		Grand total	31,510

A one crop farm does not offer regular income year after year. Due to diversity of climatic conditions there are on the average 3 good years to one poor year. Because of the recent settlement of the farmers their needs are great not only for their families but also for their farms, such as tools, animals, stables, barns, better houses and payment of their loans. The poor years increase the debts of the farmer tremendously and if unable to pay them he tries to find a refuge by telling lies.

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The Pattern of Land use. One of the greatest troubles that the farmer of Megali Vrisi has is in getting to and from his fields. His share of land which is composed of 45 stremas (10 1/2 acres), is divided into 7 fields. The smallest piece is 1/4 of an acre and the largest 2 acres. The government in its endeavor to give equal chance to all farmers has divided the land into /46/ 7 categories according to fertility and the distance from the village. Thus the nearest field is 1/5 of a mile and the farthest one is 4 1/2 miles. This type of division, besides consuming time to and from the fields and tiring the animals with unnecessary walking, also reduces the productiveness through poor management of the fields. Rotation is neglected since the farmers having their fields in certain section have to agree on crop plantation with their neighbors. The fencing of the individual fields is impossible and anyone can pasture any field after the crops are removed. There is a law that gives the right of pasturing the fields by anyone after the crops are removed.

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We can summarize the good and bad points for such a distribution of land.

Advantages:

1. Gives equal opportunity to each farmer to have equal share of fertile as well as of infertile land.

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2. Have land close to the village which can be used for vegetable crops. 241 423

3. If the crop of one section fails, due to hail or flood, still his other fields are saved.

Disadvantages:

1. Waste of time on the road.

2. Hard to work without causing trouble /47/ to the neighbors.

3. Proper rotation can not be carried on.

4. Inefficient use of man and animal labor.

5. Trouble between neighbors either for stepping or stealing from each others fields.

6. Much land is lost for the roads and division lines.

The worst of all the disadvantages are the conflicts that are created among good neighbors because of stepping in each others fields or plowing a furrow on the dividing lines. The priest of the village, who is keen minded, found out that more cases are reported to courts due to field line differences. People who work close together often do not speak to each other because of such troubles. [578] [685]

The land is suitable for tobacco and opium poppies. These two crops have played a large part during years of prosperity in establishing class distinctions and in teaching the people to be more extravagant. 241 249 511 433

Due to surplus production of tobacco crop in the country this area was not allowed to plant either tobacco or poppies, but only to raise cereals. The income from cereals was not as high and forced the farmers to tighten their economy. The luxuries one by one /48/ started disappearing from the village. The debts that were created during prosperous years based on the yearly incomes were hard to pay back. [656] [426]

At present the organized production of cereals and especially of wheat occupies the largest part of the acreage. 243

Farm Implements. The average farmer has the following implements. 000

/48 cont./ Farm Implements. The average farmer has the following implements. 241 422 407 [412] [435]

1	Harrow	$3
1	Plow, iron	1.50
1	Wooden plow	1.00
1	Yoke	1.00
3	Hoes	0.35
2	Shovels	0.25
2	Sickles	0.35

The above are the implements which the farmer uses in his farming. Borrowing of tools and implements is extensively practiced by the farmers. [474] Some of the implements and machinery that are too expensive to be owned by one farmer are owned cooperatively such as seed cleaning machine, harrow and harvesting machines. This cooperative movement is very successful and solves some of their pressing economic problems. [326] [445] Some of the implements are made locally and all repairs are done by the local blacksmith.

/49/ Domestic Animals. The livestock problem is one which is still in its infancy. 233 All the sheep are owned by the Thracians and they are increasing them every year. The sheep is the competitor of the cow. A farmer can live without sheep but cannot do without cows, since the only source of power is the cow. [492] [578] The feeling between the sheep owners and the rest of the farmers is not very good, and may develop into a very critical conflict if steps are not taken ahead of time to prevent it. Since pasturing the fields and community pasture is free to any one, [423] the sheep take advantage of this law and get the greatest benefit in competition with the cows.

The local cows are a mixture of the scrubby Macedonian breed and so far no attempt was made to improve the livestock.

One solution discussed for solving some of the pressing problems of livestock is by taxation as follows:

1. No tax should be paid by the sheep up to 12 head.
2. 12 to 25 heads 15 cents per head.
3. 25 to 40 " 30 " " "
4. 40 to 80 " 75 " " "

/49 cont./

This will give a chance for every farmer to have few and those who have too many will be obliged to reduce them due to taxes. 233

5. Every farmer who owns a pair of oxen and two /50/ cows will not pay any tax on them.

6. Those who have 5 heads of cattle will pay 40 cents per head; 5 to 7 $1.00 per head; 10 to 15, $5 per head. Also the scale of taxing should be based not only on the number of head but on the productive capacity of each cow. The better producer will pay less tax and poorest kind of cow will pay the highest.

The above is not only a measure to prevent increase in the number of cows, but also for their improvement so that the pasture can be of the utmost use for greater returns.

The pasture is common and all the animals of the village can be pastured together. Another old law which still exists for the benefit of those who have sheep, is the right of pasturing the fields after crops are removed. The owner of the field has no right to prevent others from pasturing his field after he removes his crop. The only value it has is this that everyone tries to keep livestock so as to get full advantage of his pasture rights. 233 423

The pastures are pastured the year round and year after year they are depleted from some of the best pasture plants. The only grass that occupies a large part of the best pasture is the quack grass, the thistles and wild rasberry plants. Recently the interest of a few leading farmers was directed towards improving the pasture. Some experiments with rotation, the animals /51/ at different seasons on different sections of the pasture gave best results. Harrowing early in the spring, application of fertilizers and complete rest for 3 years were methods advised. 233 246 [137] [242]

The largest part of their farming capital is composed of animals whose feeding largely depends on the pasture. If the farmers continue depleting their pasture from the continuous pasturing the time will come when a future generation will be unable to keep animals. [241] [511] [471]

[Caucasus]

/84 cont./

The village was ruled by "Gerousia", a group composed of old respected people. It is interesting here to note that even today the Greek Senate is called "Gerousia". This "Gerousia" would meet when necessary to discuss certain problems concerning their village. They had no definite calendar for meeting nor approved place for meetings. There were two dates well observed for meetings. One was St. Demeter's day -- October 26th -- for deciding to hire a village shepherd for the cattle and a guard for the fields. Another meeting which was fairly definite, was St. Constantin's day -- May 24th -- at which the redistribution of the land was decided for the coming seven years. It was one of the well-observed economic principles to redistribute the pasture for farming and leave the cultivated land for pasture. Due to the increase or decrease of the family members the land had to be redistributed /85/ according to the number of heads in the family. Once the land was given, the owner could use it as he pleased but could not pass it on to the relatives or friends. The land belonged to the village. There was another order which every one had to follow strictly. No one was allowed to increase his livestock on the community pasture, but he could increase it on hired pasture land from near by villages.

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Away from every kind of complicated civilization the Caucasians had a world of their own and found it better to preserve it centuries after centuries without adulterating it with the modern civilization.

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Most of the church, school and community problems were solved by the "Gerousia" without a general meeting or vote. The decision of "Gerousia" on any problem was final. Local conflicts and neighborhood grievances were taken care of by "Gerousia". Repairing school buildings, or church, or taking care of the poor and unfortunate were closely followed up by this group.

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This cooperative spirit for mutual aid is rarely found among any people except the Caucasians. /86/ The rush harvest season is shared alike by all. Building houses, threshing and transportation of agricultural goods is done through borrowed labor. If any, by

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accepted without complaint when necessary, as a hardship to be borne with fortitude. Sisters like to share a room, and even a bed; mothers like to work with their daughters, whom they do not consider to be underfoot. It is not contrary to peasant ethics for children of mixed sex to share sleeping quarters. Family matters are discussed by all, and children over 10 often have a voice in important decisions such as the buying or selling of a field.

Greeks value freedom and self-dependence, but the unit of self-dependence is not the individual but the family. The family is an organic whole, a system of delicately balanced roles and interrelationships. Older siblings are responsible for younger siblings, males for females. A Greek never ceases to have a claim on his family; a married son or daughter cannot be poor, starting at the bottom of the financial scale, while the parents thrive financially. A married son asks his father for help in business without losing *philotimo* or becoming dependent in character. A daughter asks for the things she cannot afford to buy. This is not dependence, it is one's rightful place within a structured, balanced whole. There is no virtue in being self-dependent in relation to one's family. But the family must be self-dependent in relation to the world, except in so far as it has a claim on government aid.

Equality within the family is a matter of personal essence, not of fairness of apportionment. An uneducated older brother is proud without bitterness of the younger brother whom he helped make a doctor. The family may impoverish itself for the education or dowering of one of the children, and the successful life of these children brings honour to the whole family. It is not uncommon to find that a man has remained unmarried so as to support his widowed sister and her family, or in order to earn a dowry for a large number of sisters. The need for obtaining these dowries was one of the main incentives for emigration to the United States. The responsibility for younger relatives is also at the base of the apportionment of positions and appointments of people who are not fitted by training or deserving by merit. A man who has been educated by older brothers who have stayed in the village working in the fields and vineyards, and who now holds a high government position, owes it to his family and to his role within it to find positions for his nephews. If he does not, he fails his family, he does not uphold the family *philotimo*, he is not a good Greek.

On the other hand, a father does try to see to it that he gives some property to every child, to sons for farming, to daughters for a dowry. This is at the base of much of the agricultural difficulty facing Greece at present, since fields have been divided, often into strips measuring a fraction of an acre, and require consolidation before effective use of mechanized farm implements can be made, as well as for contour farming and efficient fertilization.